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REFLECTIONS ON WOMEN'S NARRATIVE STORIES AND THE
CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Professional Project
A ~~Thesis~~

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In Partial Fulfillment
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Doctor of Ministry

by
Judith S. Roska

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Claremont School of Theology

Abstract

REFLECTIONS ON WOMEN'S NARRATIVE STORIES AND THE
CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION PROCESS

by Judith S. Roska

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There is a need for a broader base of literature to offer students of pastoral care, pastoral educators, theologians and ethicists the opportunity to learn from women and men who are learning and seeking supervisory competence in clinical training programs for the ministry. In addition, the history, experiences and voices of women in this area have not been well represented.

Use the
3rd person
in abstract

In order to bring women's voices and example more to the center in this aspect of professional ministry, ^{this project researched} ~~I have researched~~ the history of women in pastoral care training programs and initiated a study that would represent particular stories of women's experience. Reflections on Women's Narrative Stories and the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Certification Process is a qualitative study utilizing a pragmatic feminist approach in narrative analysis who have moved through or are moving through ^{check wording} supervisory training and the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education ~~1990s~~ ^{1970s} certification process from the early ~~70s~~ to the present.

A brief historical context from a feminist perspective of dangerous memories is provided based on Paula Buford's unpublished doctoral thesis of women in pastoral care training systems. Eight women were interviewed with the use of sensitizing questions. Audiotapes were transcribed and presented in narrative form. A hermeneutic of suspicion

and hermeneutic of restoration were applied to the stories within the narratives, both individually and collectively for reflection and interpretation. This study carries through with the theme of dangerous memories and raises ethical questions for considering both attitudinal and systems change toward relational justice in the CPE certification process.

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CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Project

Introduction and Thesis Statement

As one who has been involved in clinical pastoral education training systems over a span of twenty-five years, I write as one who has experienced socio-historical influences from the inside. I therefore claim a certain insider's perspective. I have been trained through a variety of programs in four different training centers in three different states and two different regions of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education. I have trained others in my own fledgling CPE program, and have participated in regional committee leadership and in the governance of my particular region. However, I am not yet fully certified and cannot fully claim a perspective from the inside. I stand as one who is positioned both in the center and on the margins, attempting to draw insight and meaning from understanding the historical forces that have shaped the present and to discover resources for the present and future. I want to use critical analysis and narrative study and for the integration of new learning that connects personal, professional, and structural dimensions. I use the concept of integration to describe a revelatory process that includes an attempt to make something whole, coherent, and fully and truly what it is.

This project deals with the problem of developing a helpful resource for the integration of theory, person, and practice for certification as a supervisor with the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). I will be drawing upon the stories of women supervisors about their journeys through the certification process. My thesis is that reflection on narrative stories of women supervisors will yield core theological and

psychological themes that will provide resources for the journey toward certification as a supervisor and will illuminate problems in the certification process.

The seminary student or minister who is interested in becoming a supervisor of the clinical method of learning offered in clinical pastoral education (CPE) must undertake an arduous journey that requires a process of personal integration and professional development that is unique in the fields of theological education and ministry. The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education publishes The Certification Manual of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, and the manual identifies the formal requirements for certification.¹ On the other hand, guidance for successfully completing the certification process has largely come through an oral tradition of sharing stories in individual and group supervision and during biannual regional conferences and workshops. There has been an enigmatic aura surrounding the certification process throughout the history of the CPE movement, which persists even now. Much depends on the mentoring relationship a candidate has with her supervisor. Many individuals have raised questions and critique about the certification process and its “gatekeeping” function. What does the certification process and endorsement of leadership in ACPE say about the values of the community? Is the process truly open to diversity of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and religious tradition? Does it provide a fair and accurate measure of potential talent and established competence? How do those who go through the certification process, particularly women, experience the process itself?

¹ Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, ~~the~~ The Certification Manual of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (Decatur, Georgia, 2001) 3-19.

(Decatur, Ga.: ACPE, 2001), 3-19.

Clinical pastoral education is a distinctive branch of theological education that uses an experiential action-reflection model for the practice of ministry in a clinical setting. Many denominations require a unit of CPE as a part of the curriculum for preparation in ordained ministry. Because CPE is so widely required, I believe that this study of the certification process would be of value to denominational leaders and to faculty in the areas of field education, pastoral care and counseling, and academic and vocational advising and mentoring. Reflections on narrative stories of women in the certification process would be of particular interest to those studying gender and authority issues in religious organizations and congregations. Individuals who are interested in issues surrounding the leadership of women in the parish or seminary may be interested in tracing parallel issues of women ministers seeking to establish greater levels of authority, expertise, and continuity of leadership in CPE.

This project is important for those who are considering a ministry of supervision, for those who are standing on the threshold of making a commitment to supervisory education, or for those who have met a regional certification committee for "readiness" to enter the certification process. Individuals who are currently engaged in supervisory training may derive the greatest benefit, for they are hungry for others' stories of inspiration or struggle to help provide validation of the experiences they are having on their own journeys. A resource that makes narrative stories available for encounter and reflection has the potential to inform and demystify through the telling of human experience. The jewels that can be mined from another person's story are valuable, indeed. In identifying with parts of the story, one may find support and validation, even potential empowerment for one's own journey. The power of the human story unearths

potential energy for transformation. Although this project deals with women's stories, and may in fact be more useful for a particular generation of women in supervisory education, men in the certification process and male supervisors can make their own comparisons and draw important insights. Chaplains and pastoral counselors – and those in related fields such as psychology, social work, psychotherapy, and counseling – may also find this project useful as a comparison with certification processes in their professions.

Those who are leaders in shaping the certification requirements on national and regional levels of ACPE could be informed by this project and perhaps assisted in their efforts to design a more effective and equitable certification process. These narratives provide an additional "qualitative" tool to measure the effectiveness of the Certification Committee, beyond a candidate's evaluation of the Committee appearance and feedback from the ACPE regional groups. Further quantitative and qualitative research is needed to guide the practice of CPE supervision and to inform standards of performance that shape certification requirements.

Potential leaders in the field are often discouraged from becoming CPE supervisors because the process of supervisory education and fulfilling certification requirements is perceived as a time-consuming and uncertain enterprise, with few guiding resources outside the supervisory relationship. Anything that would further understanding of the process and offer guidance and encouragement could empower future leadership in the field of clinical education. The ACPE is not simply an organization that confers credentials; it is also a part of faith communities' ministry that has creatively combined pastoral care and theological education. For the future of ACPE to continue to be bright,

its potential leaders need stronger support and guidance, and new resources are called for. This project is intended to serve as one of those new resources.

Definitions of Major Terms

A variety of terms that are specific to CPE need definition and explanation. The glossary of The Standards of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education 2002 defines *clinical pastoral education (CPE)* as "a method of learning ministry by means of pastoral functioning under supervision as developed by the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE)."² Richard C. Cabot originally conceived clinical pastoral education (CPE) as a particular method of learning pastoral practice in a clinical setting under supervision.³ Anton T. Boisen enlarged upon Cabot's concept to include case studies for theological inquiry.⁴ He called this a study of *living human documents*; persons are the primary texts for reflection and inquiry, not written works. As CPE developed, its leaders (such as William S. Keller, who believed that pastoral practice was complete only as it addressed social conditions, and others)⁵ opened the doors to integration of pastoral practice and knowledge from medicine, psychology, and other behavioral sciences. After some forty years of development and practice of clinical pastoral education, several organized but uncoordinated groups merged in 1967 to form the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education.⁶

Currently, the ACPE is the primary agency that sets program standards, accredits centers, certifies supervisors, and provides resources in the field of clinical pastoral

² Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, The Standards of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (Decatur, Georgia, 2002), 18.

³ Ibid., 1.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

Decatur, Ga.: ACPE, 2002),

education. Accreditation is extended to institutions, agencies, and parishes as centers that offer programs of CPE conducted by ACPE-certified supervisors. The variety of functions *Programs of CPE* serve include (1) part of theological education, (2) continuing education for ministry, (3) training for institutional chaplaincy, (4) training for pastoral counseling, (5) training for certification as a supervisor of clinical pastoral education, and (6) training for other specialized ministries.⁷ Theological schools grant academic credit for CPE according to the credit system of each school.⁸

When using the term *certification*, I refer to the specific definition provided in the standards published by ACPE. The glossary states that certification is "the action to grant the time-limited status of Associate Supervisor or the status of CPE Supervisor to persons who are affirmed in a review as having satisfied the ACPE Standards for the respective status."⁹ Historically, and as described in the certification manual published in 1997, the certification of a CPE supervisor is best understood as a credentialing *process* and is referred to as the *certification process*.¹⁰ The certification process includes ongoing documentation of supervisory learning and professional development through a step-wise series of reviews by the Certification Committee; each step is designed to test for specific competencies in supervision. According to the certification manual published in 1997, the certification process coincides for a time with the educational experience in Supervisory CPE, continues beyond Supervisory CPE, and includes professional experience as a pastoral educator.¹¹ Apparently, in an attempt to clarify that certification is a process

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 18.

¹⁰ ~~The~~ Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, ~~Inc.~~ The Certification Manual of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (Decatur, Georgia 1997), 1-3.

¹¹ Ibid., 1.

without entitlement, the 2002 revision of the certification manual eliminates this statement. I think the change reflects a shift to emphasizing a time-limited product-oriented model, not a true process oriented model of supervisory education. This change, points to an inherent tension in the process model of education used in CPE for students engaged in supervisory training. *Process model of education* is defined in the ACPE Standards to be "an understanding of growth and change (in behavior, beliefs, ideas, awareness, etc.) as taking place gradually or in ongoing modifications and never as being finished or perfected."¹²

Clinical pastoral education is a process model of education, and only students in CPE are able to continue in supervisory education to become supervisors of CPE. The process model of education continues through the entire certification process. The *clinical method of learning* within this process model utilizes data from the actual practice of ministry, in a particular setting as the content for reflection. Students bring data from their pastoral encounters and pastoral relationships, often in the form of a verbatim or critical incident, and reflect on their experience in the peer group. In like fashion, supervisory students bring data from their supervisory relationships and practice of supervision to reflect on their experience with a supervisory peer group and supervisor.

The CPE process model of education correlates with Boisen's emphasis on the study of dynamic living human documents. The focus of study is the ongoing experience of patients as persons in the context of the human condition. This framework of meaning and theological reflection is also applied to the learners – the students in CPE. Students study themselves and each other as living human documents, as well as patients by attending to one another over time.

¹² ACPE, ~~The Standards of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education~~ 2002, 21.

In her review of the evolution of process model, Joan Hemenway lifts up Boisen's dynamic research into the human condition, specifically his hypothesis that the terrors of mental illness should be understood at root as a religious problem, rather than solely as a medical concern.¹³ As Hemenway documents, Boisen was convinced from both his own personal experience with mental illness and from his work with patients that the manifestations of mental illness were emotional efforts to reorganize and heal the soul. This led him to the belief that serious students of religion who are going into the pastoral field must gain this understanding and learn it from patients, the living human documents. Reading these human documents in light of the best human understanding, Boisen felt, called for insight that is beyond anything imparted by books, lectures, or schools, and only a few actually can attain that level of understanding.¹⁴

Boisen's quest was to understand the basis of spiritual healing, and his quest led him to learn the case study approach and to begin supervising with this method of clinical training in 1924 at Worcester State Hospital, where he was employed as a chaplain. The fuel that fires the passion of students today in supervisory CPE often comes out of a similar quest: the desire for ability to read living human documents plus the conviction that students of theology who plan on practicing ministry should gain such an understanding.

What, then, is supervision and what are the practices and proficiencies that students in supervisory CPE are attempting to learn and must demonstrate in order to be certified? According to the standards of ACPE, *supervision* is an educational method by which a

¹³ Joan E. Hemenway, Inside the Circle: A Historical and Practical Inquiry Concerning Process Groups in Clinical Pastoral Education (Decatur, Georgia: Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, 1996), 11.

¹⁴ Hemenway, 11-12.

Atlanta;

CPE supervisor enables students to learn about self, others, God, and ministry from clinical experience and the examination of that experience, and to integrate those learnings into the students' functioning.¹⁵ Certification as a *CPE Supervisor* requires more than the ability to provide supervision. Certification requires supervisors to be specialists in supervising programs of CPE; they are clinical, theological educators who meet the requirements set forth in ACPE Standards 300.¹⁶ The 1997 version of the certification manual stresses the following three points in a helpful instructive fashion:

1. The certification process always emphasizes a candidate's ability to demonstrate at a profound level the personal and professional competence essential for supervisory education in interpersonal relationships.
2. The completion of formal requirements is always seen in relation to such a demonstrated ability to function.
3. Certification as a supervisor is always a matter of judgment of one's professional peers who are the delegated representatives of ACPE.¹⁷

These points were not given the same degree of emphasis in the current revision of the Certification Manual. I wonder whether this change also reflects a shift away from a process-oriented model of education to a product-oriented model. I noticed an intentional change in the voice of the manual from an engaging more personal introduction to a matter-of-fact impersonal tone.

Finally, the term narrative stories, needs definition. The data I use in this project are narrative stories. I ask those I interview to tell me stories about their personal experience

¹⁵ ACPE, ~~The~~ Standards of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education 2002, 22.

¹⁶ ACPE, ~~The~~ Certification Manual of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education 2001, 3.

¹⁷ ACPE, ~~The~~ Certification Manual of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education 1997, 1.

of going through the certification process. They are the authors and narrators of the stories, the story-tellers. I am the listener and receiver of the stories, attempting to hear the meaning of the experience and how the narrators construe and interpret their experience in story form. I make the assumption that these narratives are not imposing on events a form the events do not have. Rather, I view the narrative stories from an existential- philosophical vantage point, and each story represents human reality as it is for a situated, embodied, and self-creating being. I wish to explore and reflect upon the experiences of living human documents, and I seek to understand how these individuals have become who they are as supervisors by focusing on a certain phase of their development, i.e., the certification process. I combine narrative and stories together because I am working with a literary form, narrative, and a particular genre, self-disclosure.

Women's narrative stories have been the subject of research in many fields. Rosemary Radford Ruether and others have edited narratives of women religious leaders in a variety of faith communities throughout history. Womanist theologians, such as Delores S. Williams, Katie Geneva Cannon, Emilie M. Townes, Karen Baker-Fletcher, have focused on narratives of historical and contemporary black women as a source of education, spiritual nurture, creativity, inspiration, resistance, and empowerment. Feminist pastoral theologians, such as Christie Cozad Neuger, who seek to bridge theoretical and practical disciplines in pastoral care and counseling, use women's narratives to illuminate a prophetic view of invisible social, cultural and systemic forces that affect women's life stories. My project has similar commitments for women in the field of CPE.

Previous Study of the ACPE Certification Process

To my knowledge, there has been no qualitative research utilizing narrative stories of women or men supervisors about their success or lack of success in becoming certified as CPE supervisors. Within ACPE, regional certification committees and the national Certification Commission gather formal and informal data from supervisors who are engaged in the certification process for the purpose of improving it. Research directed toward improvement of the certification system has not been a priority for ACPE, however. In addition, ACPE is a relatively young organization (organized in 1967). It evolved from the pastoral care movement in theological education. Thus research has not been a primary organizational focus and has only become an area of interest quite recently.

The ACPE certification manual is continually improved and revised in order to facilitate better understanding of the credentialing process for all participants and prospective participants. For example, recent revisions of the manual have provided clearer descriptions of core knowledge subject areas that a supervisor is expected to master and upon which she/he will be evaluated. The manual also clarifies the responsibilities of the Certification Commission. The manual provides an important educational tool for individuals seeking certification and for their training supervisors and mentors. However, the concepts and structure of the manual are written for audiences inside the professional circles of CPE. The language is not accessible to a newcomer to the process. As with any professional specialty, CPE has its own jargon, conceptual system, and culture, all of which are reflected in the certification manual. The manual is dense reading, barely comprehensible for someone not acquainted with what the expected

proficiencies mean. It takes a certified CPE Supervisor to interpret it. In addition, CPE Supervisors differ in their interpretations of the manual's content. The leadership of ACPE has a growing awareness of problems with the certification process.

Histories of only three of the nine regions defined by ACPE were written by the year 2000, which marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the beginning of Clinical Pastoral Education.¹⁸ In their research for writing a history of the Pacific Region, William F. Adix and M. Jerry Davis conducted numerous interviews with supervisors of CPE programs and with participants in various regional activities.¹⁹ From the material gathered in the interviews plus written records and documentation, Adix and Davis constructed a story of the history and development of the Pacific Region. Many women's narratives were collected but were not included in the history because they were thought to be beyond the scope of the book's historical and developmental focus. Women supervisors in the region nevertheless have a high level of interest in their stories being told. My project addresses this interest, which extends beyond the Pacific Region, and offers a foundation upon which to build.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

This project is a study and reflection on the narrative stories of women going through the certification process to achieve credentials as a CPE supervisor. I am particularly interested in points of impasse in the stories and in problematic issues. Where, for example, did these women get stuck in their process and why? I will highlight core theological and psychological themes that impasses uncover. My reflection on these core

¹⁸ Homer L. Jernigan, "Clinical Pastoral Education: Reflections on the Past and Future of a Movement", *The Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, 56, no. 4 (winter 2002): 377.

¹⁹ William F. Adix and M. Jerry Davis, *The Story of the Pacific Region* (Loma Linda: Loma Linda University Printing Services, 2000), i.

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themes will be directed toward illuminating both individual and systemic problems and resources. My study is limited to the stories of eight women. Because the time it takes to move through the certification process ranges from two to ten years, I am interested in exploring these women's lives while they were going through the process and how the process affected their lives. My study will yield insights into problems requiring further study, but the limited sample of eight narratives will not provide adequate data to draw firm conclusions regarding problems with the certification process.

Gender bias is an inherent limitation of this study. Reflections on the core themes emerging out of impasses and life events of the women interviewed will naturally be biased toward women's perspectives. In addition, as the researcher and author of this project, I am a woman supervisor who is currently involved in the certification process. I thus bring my own story and struggle to the project. My own familiarity with the potential pitfalls and impasses in the certification process means that I may not be as objective as someone without such experience. My biases will affect how I hear the stories, how I will determine and value core themes, and how I will reflect upon them. Further, in some cases I have interviewed colleagues who are known to me. Knowing some of these women likely affects my level of empathy, probably increasing it, as I listen to their stories. I hope, nevertheless, that my "insider" understanding of the process assists me in entering the life of the narrator.

Granted, the many limitations of this project might make it less engaging for communities of faith, or might lead it to be considered irrelevant to the broad field of ministry. A major limitation is its apparent scope and specificity. The supervision of clinical pastoral education is a very specific field of ministry with a particular action and

reflection model for learning and pastoral development in a clinical setting. In addition, as a professional body, ACPE has a small number of supervisors given the number of program units of CPE it administers. A CPE Supervisor's time and commitment to this particular ministry is split among other areas of accountability for ministry within the institution and for bridging ministries in the community. Most CPE supervisors have many responsibilities in the institutions where they are employed over and above supervision of CPE programs.

The relevance of this project increases, however, when the large number of students who receive CPE training is considered. Students in CPE represent a wide spectrum of faith communities, many of which require CPE training for ordination, and students go on to establish themselves in a variety of ministries. The constituency of ACPE is nothing less than "the people of God," and the organization holds itself accountable in relation to CPE students, religious institutions and faith groups, institutions of theological education, and the centers that support its programs.

Research Methodology

I have interviewed eight women CPE supervisors in separate telephone conversations. I began by contacting each woman to discuss the project. I outlined the study methodology and discussed how confidentiality would be protected. When all questions were answered to the satisfaction of each woman, I invited her to participate. All eight whom I approached agreed to be interviewed. I sent each one a signed confidentiality agreement (see appendix) and a copy of the sensitizing questions for the interview. These questions were designed to "prime the pump" and to help each participant to engage with their past and, in some cases, present experiences so recollections would be fresh when I

called for the interview. With each interviewee, I used the same questions, which were specifically designed to elicit narrative stories thick with meaning and feelings.

The study group includes six women who completed the process and were certified as CPE supervisors, one who was not successful, and one who was currently in the certification process at the time of the interview. Among the interviewees were two women of color and two lesbian women. The interviewees come from a variety of geographical areas of ACPE and were engaged in the certification process from the early 1970s through the early 2000s.

I will use the method of narrative inquiry proposed by D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly.²⁰ I am particularly interested in the theoretical underpinnings of the use of narrative stories as research methodology. My approach to this study is similar to the work of others who use narrative research in the fields of pastoral counseling, adult development, psychology, sociology, and womens' studies.²¹

I drew upon two works from the behavioral sciences in designing the questions about mentoring relationships. The psychologist Ruthellen Josselson offers a theory of relationship and a model of dimensions of relationship that I find helpful in looking at the mentoring relationship in supervisory education.²² Josselson has also studied the

²⁰ D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 40-62.

²¹ Christie Cozad Neuger, Counseling Women: A Narrative, Pastoral Approach (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 2001); James E Birren, Gary Kenyon, Jan Erik Ruth, Johannes J.F. Schroots, and Torbjorn Svensson, eds., Aging and Biography: Explorations in Adult Development (New York: Springer Publishing, 1996); Andrew Solomon, The Noonday Demon: An Atlas of Depression (New York: Simon & Schuster Publishing, 2001); Carter Heyward, When Boundaries Betray Us: Beyond Illusions of What is Ethical in Therapy and Life (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993). — see Bib. info.

²² Ruthellen Josselson, The Space Between Us: Exploring the Dimensions of Human Relationships (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1996).

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development of female identity and this focus clearly is applicable to my project.²³ Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot explores the theme of respect in her sociological study of several asymmetrical relationships, including the student-teacher relationship.²⁴ I believe that the attitude and behavior that demonstrate respect as perceived by the supervisory student are also fruitful themes to explore for women in asymmetrical relationships, so I asked the women about their experience in this area.

I was especially interested in learning how the women I interviewed experienced their lives as they sought to integrate their theories, person, and practice while in the certification process. How did they perceive the experiences of role modeling that they got? I sought to learn about the women's experience and development from an "inside" perspective by asking about developmental tasks, turning points, stresses, impasses, sources of care, and coping strategies. Drawing on methodology articulated by Larry Kent Graham, I listened for metaphors and themes that pointed toward explicit emotional meanings and experiences of the presence and power of God.²⁵ How the women understand this part of their journey in ministry from a theological perspective is of special interest. An important part of this project is the theological reflection that the narrative stories provide.

The Use of a Journal

As a way of reflecting on my experience and developing my own voice, I have followed a discipline of journal writing for much of my life. I have taught journal writing

²³ Ruthellen Josselson, Revising Herself: The Story of Women's Identity from College to Midlife (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). *The*

²⁴ Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, Respect: An Exploration (Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus Books, 2000). *Pub.*

²⁵ Larry Kent Graham, Discovering Images of God: Narratives of Care among Lesbians and Gays (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997).

workshops and have studied the variety of ways journaling has been used in people's lives. Reading journals of women writers has been companionship for me in my own development as a woman. When I began more intensive reflection of womanist literature and womanist voices in order to enlarge my capacity for theological analysis, my mentor at the time, Karen Baker-Fletcher, suggested that I keep a journal of my engagement with womanist voices. When I presented the proposal for this study to her, her immediate response was that it was a "safe" project, which I received as a challenge that I need to keep out in front of me as I proceed. I have used and continue to use the journal to write my responses to the following questions: *"What makes it safe? What makes it not safe? Will it be prophetic enough to challenge the community it impacts?"*

Writing in my journal was also an important tool for preparing myself for the interviews. I sought to find ways to enter as fully as I could into each interviewee's experience, especially since I did not have the benefit of visiting the women in their own environments and joining with them in that fashion. Using the journal helped me be present in the process of hearing the women's stories and present to my own process. At times, the journal was a medium for chronicling events and making process notes. My journal entries also allowed me to have a conversation with the voices of writers who emerged in my consciousness.

Five Parts of the Project

The first part of this project has been an introduction and overview. The second part of this project, Chapter 2, examines the historical background of women's experiences in the pastoral care movement and a discussion of the insufficiency of that literature to meet current needs and challenges. I provide a brief discussion of the historical background of

CPE, ACPE, and CPE supervision as a backdrop for understanding of women's experience in these systems. In addition, I identify some challenges affecting women supervisors and their certification process. The theoretical framework in Chapter 3 offers a discussion of my approach and method, in other words, what I am doing in this study and why I am doing it. I discuss theories that focus on relationship and women's development, and explore themes of power and respect in asymmetrical relationships. I discuss the use of narrative inquiry to study living human documents, the use of theological reflection, and my understanding of theological and psychological themes.

In the fourth part, I turn to focus on the women's narrative stories. Chapter 4 provides a discussion of the narrative stories of women supervisors in the early years of the CPE movement, while Chapter 5 provides the stories of women who have undertaken certification more recently. Finally, in Chapter 6, I provide some analysis of the stories, reflections and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Women's Experiences in the Literature

Understanding the Historical Context for Women in Pastoral Care Systems

The problem to be addressed by this project is the development of a helpful resource for the integration of theory, person, and practice for the purpose of obtaining the professional certification as a clinical pastoral education supervisor. While the practice of sharing oral history has been a strength of clinical pastoral education programs, the historical perspective has often been overlooked as a resource for understanding present problems and practices. It has been undervalued as a mirror that yields a defining picture of the past from which we have come, creating the ground on which we now stand. Therefore, an understanding of the historical context in which women have attempted to learn about pastoral care and function as pastoral caregivers is of great importance.

The few written histories of clinical pastoral education have followed traditional historical approaches that focus on tracing the chronology of the pastoral care movement in the United States, narrating regional stories that emphasize important developments and changes, or providing biographical material related to significant persons and events. Two noteworthy examples of the first type are Brooks E. Holifield, A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization, and Charles E. Hall, Head and Heart: The Story of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement.¹ There is surging interest in the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education at this point in its development for written histories that help this professional community of pastoral caregivers remember

¹E. Brooks Holifield, A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1983); Charles Hall, Head and Heart: The Story of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement (Decatur, GA: Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, Inc., 1992).

who we are and the influences that continue to shape us. It is a part of my own motivation for this project.

Two recent works in the field that share an emphasis in turning to the historical context in order to understand and integrate “confusing” or “lost” pieces of the tradition that may be helpful in resolving significant current problems and constructing a better future. They are Hemenway, Inside the Circle: A Historical and Practical Inquiry Concerning Process Groups in Clinical Pastoral Education, and Paula Ellen Buford, The Lost Tradition of Women Pastoral Caregivers From 1925-1967: A ‘Dangerous Memory’.² At this juncture I would like to compare and contrast the two histories and point out differences in methodology to illustrate both the significance of each work and the insufficiency of it.

Hemenway is particularly interested in the process-group work in CPE, and she seeks to highlight the strengths of small process-groups, as educational tools in programs of clinical training for ministry.³ In her experience as a CPE Supervisor, she is keenly aware of the confusion, problematic for students and supervisors alike, that results from inconsistent educational methodology. Hemenway addresses the problem from what she calls “the inside.” Using the metaphor “inside the circle” to describe the powerful nature of the small group in CPE, Hemenway places these process-groups at the center of her inquiry and examines the historical influences that have shaped the methodological and theoretical inheritance of CPE. She discusses how dissonant strands of various

² ~~Hemenway 2012~~ Paula Ellen Buford, “The Lost Tradition of Women Pastoral Caregivers From 1925-1967: A ‘Dangerous Memory’ ” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia Theological Seminary, 1997).

³ Process-group work is Hemenway’s reference to unstructured group sessions known as “interpersonal group,” “interpersonal relations group,” “covenant group,” “open seminar,” or simply “group life.”

psychological (psychoanalytic and humanistic) and educational traditions were incorporated into contemporary methodologies and theoretical assumptions. This unexamined practice made for unintelligible and incoherent group theories.⁴

Hemenway believes that examination and coherent presentation of a history of intellectual trends in the fields of psychology and education, along with the ideas and practices from these fields embraced by clinical pastoral educators, will yield to the development of more coherent group theories. She emphasizes the need to underpin theoretically the small process-group work that she claims is the unique shining jewel of CPE. Hemenway weaves this history in part one of the book; she develops her own group theory out of the historical groundwork in part two. Here is how Hemenway outlines the integrative method in her study:

It is the intent of this study to first understand the problem and its ramifications and, second to propose a theory of group work which balances and integrates these two approaches and is consistent with the CPE historical inheritance, clinical practice, and commitment to theological education.⁵

Hemenway focuses on the historical context in the service of integrating the past with the present in a consciousness raising, educational, and even therapeutic way. The “confusion” that Hemenway points out is more than a problem of unclear methodology; it has done damage to students in small process-groups and has become a both a theological and ethical problem for theological and pastoral education. In addition, the “confusion” has affected supervisory education, formation and the process of certification. Hemenway draws several important conclusions. “CPE supervisors have been lax about developing

⁴ In Hemenway's Introduction to Inside the Circle, she asserts that CPE work with individual students has been primarily influenced by the psychoanalytic tradition, while process-group work has been influenced by the humanistic psychology tradition (vii)

⁵ Ibid.

and articulating theoretical material relevant to their group work.” They have generally not subjected themselves to the rigors of research in the study of group dynamics.

Supervisors are “not cognizant of the history of group work in CPE, nor are they

✓ particularly aware of suitable theoreticians to guide them in their practice”⁶ I agree with her conclusions and will emphasize in this study how these inadequacies in theoretical foundations impact individuals attempting to gain the experience and competency necessary for certification.

Hemenway has done an admirable job in developing a historical perspective of CPE, using small process-group work as the centerpiece. She has relied upon multiple and diverse sources and brought them to bear in an intelligent and very helpful way.

Hemenway’s work is a major contribution to the professional literature because there previously had been no comprehensive historical survey related to small process-group work and no integrative methodology of this type. Hemenway seeks to provide as accurate a picture as possible from the perspective of her entry point into CPE history. Her specific historical groundwork fills in certain historical blanks and gaps and constructs a particular image of CPE for colleagues and students in CPE. Her contribution helps CPE supervisors, pastoral educators, who rely upon psychological theories to lead small groups of students, make sense of their theoretical heritage. The picture she has constructed with her particular inquiry is useful and needed.

Hemenway of course, does not attempt to address *all* the problems with CPE in her study, rather she attempts to give insight, direction, and modeling to the particular problem of small process-group work leadership that has fostered confusion and

⁶ Ibid., 92.

critique. For the most part she succeeds. She focuses exclusively on the group itself as the vital component of CPE. She states:

Since the group is vital, if not *the* vital component of the CPE experience, the task of understanding and utilizing the group more effectively emerges as a critical need today. In fact, knowledgeable and competent group process work may well be key to both the present and future of clinical pastoral education if its continuing contribution to theological education and training is to endure.⁷

There is some danger in putting exclusive attention on the task of improving small process-group leadership at the center of a hopeful future vision of CPE. The chosen subject area provides a provocative and constructive perspective, but a limited one. We may miss other important problematic aspects that could also challenge the future of CPE if they are not addressed as well. Hemenway omits some important influences that shape group leadership and group theory. If the CPE historical inheritance is to be a useful mirror, it needs to include a broader socio-historical perspective and critique; this broader task calls for a somewhat different hermeneutic.

Although Hemenway rightly seeks to understand the problem and its ramifications through her stress on historical trends and developments in CPE as they were assimilated from the behavioral sciences, I see two interrelated problems with her approach. 1) She strives for consistency with the "CPE historical inheritance" using a traditional historical method that arguably remains within traditional patriarchal norms and structures. 2) In her attempt to propose a group theory that uses her historical groundwork, she does not involve a historical perspective that takes into consideration a social critique and an analysis of power dynamics.

⁷ Ibid.

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I recall one of my seminary professors, Mary Potter Engel at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, using the metaphor of a fishing pond. You can put your pole in wherever you want, let the line down, bring it up, and see what you catch. You can put your pole in anywhere, but the pond is so big that you can only come up with whatever might be within range of the hook. You can drop the line down as deep or as shallow as you wish. Hemenway's view "inside the circle" considers only a certain place in the pond. Even though her view recognizes the importance of a systems perspective, it does not include enough critique of CPE as a system with institutional structures impacted by social power arrangements.

In this study, I believe that identification of the hermeneutic and approach to history is critical. As Hemenway has done in her inquiry, I find it helpful at this juncture to consider a 1990 article by Bonnie Miller-McLemore and William Meyers, "Can One Be Faithful While Teaching Research Methods to D.Min. Students?"⁸ Using the insights of social theorist Jurgen Habermas, the authors outline three dimensions of concern based on three kinds of approaches to research: (1) efforts to control the world, (2) efforts to understand the world, (3) efforts to transform the world. The first approach uses quantitative methods emphasizing technical aspects; the second uses qualitative methods emphasizing practical aspects; the third approach uses correlative methods emphasizing "emanicipatory" aspects. The authors argue that D.Min. research should use all three of these approaches critically and self-consciously.⁸

Hemenway is interested in transformation as an outcome of her work, and she approaches the inquiry predominantly as a clinician. She hopes that the insights she

⁸ Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry, 12 (1990): 15-19.

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shares become a catalyst for change in the clinical arena and will affect the practice of CPE supervisors. She believes that “by being both passionately committed to the usefulness of the group process in CPE *and* standing in an engaged but critical relationship to it, the transformative implications of such research are actualized.”⁹

These comments are important to this study and approach, as they describe Hemenway’s hermeneutical stance as “passionately committed” to the specific subject of her inquiry, and “critically engaged”. I do not agree that the transformative implications of such research are actualized as readily as Hemenway implies. I believe that it is necessary to stand in an engaged but critical relationship to one’s subject; for transformation to occur and not simply change, however, we must go into territory that may more deeply threaten our comfort with the status quo. Factors that escape awareness and identification also escape critique. Consequently, a feminist/womanist hermeneutic of suspicion would be equipped to release further emancipatory potentials that can move us toward accomplishing transformation in CPE.

This study is concerned with the technical aspects of the CPE certification process and how it could be improved. It is also concerned with the stories of women who have experienced problems and obstacles as they have sought to develop their professional and clinical expertise and have attempted to establish self-confidence in the ministry of CPE supervision. Finally, this study is intended to emancipate us from some of the limitations and destructive ramifications of a portion of history that has been repressed.

It is at this point that Paula Ellen Buford’s unpublished doctoral research can make a difference in how the field of pastoral care and its history is perceived. A history with women is a different story than one without mention of women, or with “invisible,”

⁹ Hemenway, 43.

“unknown,” or “unnamed” women. Buford’s study is particularly focused on the cognitive area with concern for “emancipatory” aspects of research and achieving transformation as previously discussed. She has responded to a call to do justice as a pastor and as a scholar. The importance of her perspective to this study is three-fold. First, Buford’s study is concerned with recovering a lost tradition of women pastoral caregivers and delving into an area that is potentially dangerous “to remember” as it threatens the status quo and our present historical constructions. Second, it uses a hermeneutic of suspicion and restoration. A *hermeneutic of suspicion* begins with suspicion that truth has been covered over and reality has been misrepresented. It is not a disinterested approach of neutrality or a ready acceptance of the status quo. A *hermeneutic of restoration* seeks to restore the community to healing and wholeness with the presence of the hidden truths embedded in the stories. Third, Buford lays important historical groundwork for this study’s emphasis on women’s stories.

Buford claims that she has struggled to use “constructive aggression” through her dissertation. Kathleen Grieder’s understanding of constructive aggression, as the power to respond to the biblical call to do justice is descriptive of Buford’s methodology. For Grieder, constructive aggression is an answer to the question, “Where shall I and other people of faith find the power to respond to the biblical call to do justice, and how can we employ that power justly without using it for violence?”¹⁰ Buford’s aggression has called her to the task of naming memories. These memories are “~~dangerous but not destructive~~” *same of it* to the pastoral care field.” They challenge individual care giving and point “toward larger

¹⁰ Buford quotes Grieder on p. 326 as saying that this is a personal and communal faith question with which she has wrestled all of her life. (p. 326).

social issues which call for reform of institutions and practices.”¹¹ I will elaborate upon the significance and limitations of Buford’s work for this study to discuss how women’s history in CPE has been presented.

Buford’s Contribution to the Literature

I observed that Paula Buford undertakes her project as a call to justice. Buford’s theology is rooted in liberation and in the prophetic resources of Biblical tradition. Her work follows the stream of feminist scholarship that seeks to remember and value the experiences of women and to bridge personal and social perspectives to reconstruct the cultural narrative. The cultural narrative is the story we tell to make meaning out of the messages we get from the culture in which we live; the narrative helps us live our culture with some degree of meaning and competence. We internalize the narrative, and it becomes a significant strand of our personal story. Part of Buford’s motivation for her dissertation came out of a hurtful experience as a female student in a CPE training program. She was also moved by a desire to “help free persons from marginalized groups, as well as the dominant group, from the cultural stereotypes to which they are bound.”¹² Buford notes that the private interior self of the pastoral caregiver cannot be divorced from public life and ministry. She also observes that the pastoral care and counseling movement has unconsciously promoted sexism and patriarchal values from its composition of white liberal males.¹³

¹¹ Paula Ellen Buford describes her personal motivation for this study ushering from her experience in clinical pastoral training in the early 80s, which she found both liberating and constraining. After failing two committees for advanced standing in CPE, because of her inability to acknowledge and express her anger and to deal with a confrontational committee process, she formulated the question, “How were the expectations and customs of this male system related to learning about how to offer pastoral care?” Quoted from p. 326.

¹² Buford, 17.

¹³ Ibid.

As a pastoral counselor, Buford utilizes psychoanalytic theory to build her theological premise that repressed memories, maintained and unexamined, are destructive. According to psychoanalytic theory, repression is both a psychological defense and the aim of all psychological defenses.¹⁴ However, without such memories we have a false picture of what happened in the past. We are bound to the possibility of repeating the past, which threatens our wholeness. This is particularly true if psychological trauma has occurred. Psychoanalytic theory provides the most helpful understanding of the relationship between trauma and repression. Psychological defenses ultimately aim to achieve repression of the trauma. In the process, both the self and community are silenced, through maintaining a defense against an internal threat to the self and the community.

Judith Lewis Herman, in her classic work Trauma and Recovery, successfully and practically bridges personal and social perspectives as she examines in depth the psychological dynamics and damage done to self and community when trauma is inflicted through the abuse of power relationships and memories are repressed.¹⁵ Herman points out that there are no bystanders in abuse of power and infliction of trauma. Bystanders are not silent neutral observers without participation. So-called bystanders have a distinct role in collaborating with the abuse, which is what abusers depend on to continue meeting their needs in inappropriate ways.¹⁶ Herman's analysis helps those of us in ministry to understand the pastoral necessity of calling the community to

¹⁴ Buford, 12, citing Peter L. Giovacchini, A Narrative Textbook of Psychoanalysis (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aaronson, 1987), 199-200. Defenses are mental mechanisms that are set in motion by anxiety and a reaction to internal danger. The argument adopts Freud's understanding that repression is the primary defense mechanism.

¹⁵ Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

¹⁶ Ibid., 8. Herman stresses how the "bystander" is a corroborator in abusive power dynamics through keeping silent about abuse and trauma. The pressure to be silent is a common response to trauma, given the psychological defenses that protect the psyche in trauma.

accountability and action. Appropriate actions include efforts to reverse the silencing that tears at the heart and soul of a community and to seek appropriate forms of healing and restoration, actions which inevitably threaten the status quo.

My agenda and motivation is similar to Buford's. I am concerned with the ways in which women who feel called to leadership in CPE are devalued and silenced, both personally and socially. Buford and I overlap with the attention that our respective studies give to this particular group of women. I am also looking for "dangerous memories" in women's stories that have been suppressed in the past, in addition to attitudes and practices in the present that are hurtful to women coming from differing cultural and ethnic groups. I believe that bringing these stories to the consciousness of pastoral caregivers and educators is an important realm for theological reflection and ethical discourse. Like Buford, I am concerned with joining others in efforts to liberate the CPE cultural narrative from its bondage to the social sins of the past and to restore the CPE community to healing and wholeness.

As ministers who deal with theological education and pastoral formation, CPE supervisors are in a unique position of power and authority in relation to newly emerging ministers who are enrolled in clinical education programs. The clinic provides a place where untimely and tragic death, human suffering, and anguish are all part of the daily fare. In the face of such unrelenting pain in the clinical context, students experience their own vulnerability. Consequently, participants in CPE programs may be particularly vulnerable in relation to the power and authority of the supervisor. In my own experiences as a female student in the mid-1970s, for example, I was not well supervised in my attempts to bring care to families while I was feeling exceedingly vulnerable. In

fact, although some of my experience in CPE was transforming for me and assisted my learning, too much of the supervision was hurtful and painful to me. As a young woman in pastoral formation, I experienced lack of help and expertise, combined with male supervisors who were either inappropriately intimate or withdrawing and punitive. These experiences set a template for wounding from which I had to recover personally in order to reclaim my voice and pastoral calling.

I left my studies and was only able to reenter my theological education eight years later. I am a white, middle-class woman who was born in the Midwest in the early 1950s and was raised with a Protestant work ethic. I was fairly sheltered and had been socialized to be feminine, rather than to be accepted for who I was. Out of my upbringing, I had a positive view of male authority and tended to take a subordinate position in relation to that authority. Female authority was not to be taken seriously, and I believed that I was not taken seriously. As my own consciousness grew with the help of feminist literature some years after my first CPE experience, I realized how vulnerable my former posture had made me in the world. As I live with my own dangerous memories and collect the dangerous memories of other women in our field, I continue to be concerned about women's pastoral formation as they encounter structures designed for helping them to respond to their unique calling and to develop their pastoral skills and identity.

Buford and I work with similar feminist theoretical underpinnings, especially our ethnographic and narrative approaches to our respective studies. We also share important theological thematic connections. In the next chapter, I will elaborate on my methodology and the particular theoretical and theological perspectives that I utilize in this study.

Buford and I differ, however, in two major dimensions: the historical time frame and the scope of the subject. Buford studies the years before 1967, the point when structures for pastoral care training programs became more institutionalized. I begin in the early 1970's, after the shift into further institutionalization, and I focus on the certification of supervisors as the interpretive lens. My study includes particular training activities and events central to the certification process, which include an ongoing mentoring supervisory relationship that guides and facilitates learning and professional development. Going through the certification process involves submitting required documents and meeting a series of committees. In the end, a supervisor emerges from the mentoring/training process, demonstrates competence to training supervisors and certification committee, and earns the professional credential needed to function autonomously as a clinical pastoral educator.

Buford looks back at the history of women's participation in pastoral care training programs to remember their stories and to cultivate the collective truth-telling in them by patching them together in what she calls a narrative quilt. Buford compiles her data from primary sources such as interviews, letters, registration and certification documents, and from secondary sources such as regional and national histories of the pastoral care movement. She expected to find controversy about women's participation in clinical training programs, but she could not validate her thesis with two exceptions:

- indent* → 1. Some state mental hospitals had policies written by the state or federal government that persons in training had to be ordained and/or male.

- indent* → 2. Anton Boisen wrote a letter for his female student, Helen Flanders Dunbar and offered a glowing recommendation, “even though she is a woman.”¹⁷

This is consistent with what Buford learned from archives and from talking with leaders in the pastoral care field, including Charles Gerkin and Peggy Way. Women’s participation was not an issue because both men and women assumed that ministry was a male profession, and women were not a threat. In some cases, a student’s wife was automatically accepted into a CPE program if there was space.¹⁸

Once within the pastoral training system, there were constraining trends for women that were distinctive from the social environments of other helping fields such as social work, psychology, nursing, and psychiatry. Buford identifies eight trends: (1) the shift in professional functioning from “theolog”/ aide to that of a chaplain, and the accompanying shift in the focus of learning from a case study method to a focus on the person of the caregiver, (2) the “rebel” identity and accompanying behavior of ministers trying to individuate from “mother” church, (3) a normative supervisory style that was aggressive and confrontive, (4) a “good ole boy system” dependent on a mentoring supervisory relationship and a subjective interpersonal, credentialing process, (5) a psychodynamic orientation, (6) a dual-track system of advancement where women were allowed to be learners but not teachers, (7) women’s socialization into this male culture in stereotypical roles, (8) the need for this growing specialization to be recognized by seminaries and denominations as a legitimate avenue for ordained ministry. Although a few women received advanced training and certification, jobs in the field were not open to women,

¹⁷ Buford, 106.

¹⁸ Ibid., 106.

and few employers had a willingness to buck the system of gender-segregated employment.¹⁹

The earliest training groups for women included ministers' wives, female seminarians, female missionaries, female Christian educators, female psychologists, and women from other backgrounds.²⁰ Buford cites a 1938 study by the Federal Council of Churches that provides statistical data revealing information about the identities of women participants in clinical education. No local pastors or chaplains/supervisors were mentioned; one-third were pastors' wives; 15% were teachers in theological schools, 18% were YWCA secretaries or directors of religion; 16% were in social work; and the remainder were in foreign missions, church music, and secretarial work.²¹ The study concluded that, since its inception in 1925, clinical training had little influence upon changing the occupation or field of the theological student. Buford notes, however, that with the passing of time, clinical training did influence the career decisions of some women. Both the Institute for Pastoral Counseling and the Council for Clinical Training had a few women working as full supervisors, others as assistant supervisors, and some as chaplains and pastoral counselors.²²

Buford concludes that women were tokens in male-dominated training systems because their participation remained under 20% in most training centers. She writes,

In addition to being tokens in male-dominated clinical training centers, women lived during a backlash period in culture which 'kept women from being full people in our society' (Friedan, 7). Male supervisors floundered in relating to women professionally. L.L. McGee remembers his discovery that women could

¹⁹ Ibid., 107-108.

²⁰ Buford gathers this data from early training pictures and newsletter articles at Worcester State and Elgin State Hospitals (The Boisen Files, Chicago Theological Seminary, The Menniger Foundation, Pitts Theological Library), 120.

²¹ Ibid., 121.

²² Ibid.

be equals and friends, without being sexual objects (telephone interview, July 30, 1991). John Thomas reminded me of how disturbing women's presence was among male clergy. When he was in at the Presbyterian Seminary in Chicago, he said the men had "quite the struggle" deciding if women from the Christian Education school across the street should be permitted to eat in the cafeteria with them 'all at the same time' (personal interview, March 10, 1992).²³

In Buford's study, material quoted from interviews articulates a similar dilemma from the female perspective. This material clearly shows that women were challenged on many levels to avoid the snares harmful to their own professional development. As a minority group, women students had to deal with and survive male peers' and supervisors' anxiety issues and defenses about women's power that were stimulated by having a female present in the group. In their uneasiness about women's power, men used the defenses of splitting and projective identification either to idealize women or to devalue them. Idealized women were spiritual saints, nurturing mothers, little girls to be adored and protected, and super women. The devalued women were considered seductresses or phallic women who were stereotyped as iron maidens.²⁴ Buford puts this phenomenon into context by locating it in the backlash period from 1920 to 1965, between the first and second waves of feminism. She notes that progress for women during the first wave of feminism (1848-1920) was followed by a period of repression, during which women's political, educational, and career opportunities were stifled. This second backlash period, from 1920 to 1965, coincided with the formative years of the clinical pastoral training movement, from 1925 to 1970.²⁵

The dangerous memories that Buford discovers include the pain of women trying to gain their own pastoral identity and voice in the midst of the gender polarization that was

²³ Ibid., 123.

²⁴ Ibid., 124.

²⁵ Ibid., 66.

common in the culture, compounded by the anxiety men had in relating to power in women. Women students reported feeling “used” by the men to help them work out their feelings about women, while their own emotional and professional development was ignored or minimized. Buford cites an illustrative example based on an interview with Pat Johnson.

She (Johnson) believes that women were welcomed into training groups in the late 1960’s because of the emphasis on helping men to “get in touch with their feelings” and because of the Jungian emphasis on persons’ balancing the masculine/feminine polarities in their personalities within the Institute of Pastoral Care. Women were feeling experts, thus functioning as “emotional prostitutes” for the men, with little regard for their own emotional and professional development.²⁶

Women students had to put up with inappropriate “benignly paternalistic” supervision and supervisory evaluations. Women’s comments were not listened to, or men got credit for them. Women who were seen as the “pet” or little girl were not supposed to be as competent as their male peers. For example, a particular woman who was seen in this light was assessed as “promising” because the supervisor thought she “was cute and fun” and liked by members of the opposite sex. He thought so even after the student admitted of her own accord that she was afraid of men and “runs if she thinks they might touch her.”²⁷

As I have previously mentioned, many women in CPE programs in the era Buford studies were ministers’ wives who wanted to experience CPE training alongside their husbands. Buford cites letters from male supervisors that discuss this phenomenon and that address their mixed feelings about having “wives” in their programs. The male supervisors’ writing indicates that these women were not seen as individuals with

²⁶ Ibid., 126.

²⁷ Ibid., 126.

vocational interests of their own. They were categorized as “wives,” without an identity of their own except that derived from the male identity of their husbands. I remember my own negative experience, some years later, of being seen by male peers and supervisor as a “doctor’s wife,” even though I did not identify myself that way and was, in fact, a seminary student serious about a vocation in the ministry. Many of the women in Buford’s study later assumed important identities within the church and were taken into clinical training programs but they still met with difficulty. They had to navigate through much ambivalence and projection.

Buford discovers only three women who were CPE supervisors 1967: Helen Tytus Terkelson, Mary “Louise” Long, and Helen Flanders Dunbar. In her study, Buford elects not to include a life narrative for Helen Flanders Dunbar; she is the most well-known woman because of her significant contribution as one of the early founders of the clinical pastoral education movement. Buford develops a “life narrative” for Helen Terkelson from biographical information from family, friends, former students, and colleagues, and she was able to personally interview Louise Long before her death.

Buford also interviewed Joan Hemenway, whose book is a significant contribution to the field of education in pastoral care and counseling. In her interview, Hemenway (who did her initial clinical training in 1966) discusses her experience as the only woman in a peer group of nine males with two male supervisors and a male psychiatrist. She remembers being told by several men in a “truth-telling finale” at the end of her training that she was not “a real woman” (she was apparently cast in the “iron maiden” role). This experience led her to identify that “This is a problem...this world of church and

men.”²⁸ Fortunately, the impact of “this world of church and men” could not stifle her vocational development.

The rest of Hemenway’s story illustrates a gifted woman who was encouraged by a male supervisor and who was mentored appropriately, given the social context. She found more support and encouragement for vocational development in the field of pastoral care and counseling than in the institutional church. In the interview, Hemenway does not offer specific comment about her journey through the certification process. She mentions a brief period when she worked for a publishing company after completing seminary because she needed to evaluate her options for ministry at a time when few women ministers were welcomed as parish leaders in her Methodist tradition.

Buford, an ordained minister and professional pastoral counselor herself, found in her construction of a narrative “quilt” women who were able to survive and seemed to thrive. In general, these women were considered by their male peers to be exceptional, either in talent or in personal attributes. Most of them did not see themselves as pioneers; as one woman says, “to be a pioneer means someone must follow.” Buford concludes that these women “were not seeking leadership to improve their status, but to fulfill their calling.” They did not see themselves as feminists; some, like Louise Long, even reacted negatively to the feminist voice as it was beginning to emerge in the ^{1960s} 1960s. They were able to succeed in the company of men, unless there was a turn of prevailing attitude against a particular woman as was the case for Louise Long.

Long’s certification as a pastoral educator, and consequently her function as a pastoral educator, was apparently suspended by the national director after her move to California. The reasons for this action against her are unclear but involve her attempt to

²⁸ Ibid., 127.

cultivate and start a CPE training program at a new facility. Long's credentials were eventually reinstated, but she never supervised another CPE program after that. Long's enjoyment and passion for the work of supervision are well documented. She was clearly an inspiration to many of her male peers and was a valued mentor to her male students. Under her tutelage, some of her former students were inspired to become supervisors themselves. Buford sought Long's version of the story, but Long chose not to discuss the details nor to dwell on the professional barriers she had experienced as a woman. Long did share, however, a few anecdotes that yield some insights in this area. When a chaplaincy position opened in Little Rock, she initially did not consider applying. "I had good qualifications, but I know how people felt about a woman".²⁹

Long's philosophy about being propositioned by members of the opposite sex grew out of plenty of experience. She sounds both confident and practical when she says, "Southern girls know how to handle men – don't hurt their feelings when they proposition. Say 'no' in a way that makes them feel better. They intend the proposition as a compliment and don't intend you to take them up on it!"³⁰ Long enjoyed being a female chaplain, and it amused her when people were amused and surprised. Her sense of humor was vital, and she used her wit to her advantage. When people would respond, "What!" and tell her they never heard of a woman chaplain, she would say, "From the neck up we're all the same, and that's the part we use in our work!"³¹ From what I can surmise, the interview Buford conducted with Long shows a woman who is fondly reminiscing as she looks back at a career she loved, having a younger colleague as a receptive listener.

²⁹ Ibid., 168.

³⁰ Ibid., 169.

³¹ *This page*

According to Buford, Helen Terkelson identified more with the feminist voice of her time; she heard that voice as an encouragement and solidarity that connected her with a source of strength for her pastoral leadership. I am interested in hearing from the women in my study, who follow the earliest documented women CPE supervisors, how the feminist and womanist voices and consciousness have or have not influenced their journeys through the certification process. How do different women hear this voice, and where do they find their source of strength?

Buford makes an important observation about how women's stories are presented in various histories to which she has access. She finds that despite a number of documented women trainees in CPE training programs, their representation in the histories and information about them is scant. Only Helen Flanders Dunbar, as one of the founders of the CPE movement, is represented well in a number of histories. Louise Long is presented in the history of the Pacific Region; authors William Adix and Jerry M. Davis briefly discuss her years of service and provide a photo, but there is no in-depth discussion of the controversy that occurred when she came to the Pacific Region. Buford concludes, however, that within hostile professional environments and with little societal support, women *were present* in professional pastoral care training settings:

The few women who sought credentialing were visionaries who had the imagination and courage to see beyond the common roles and career paths of the time which were open to women and often were unaware that their individual movements for professional empowerment were significant for the entire pastoral care system. Even though they enacted feminist ideals, they often did not consciously hold feminist principles, were often isolated, and saw no possibility of interacting with other women.³²

← ³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 137.

I am now interested in exploring how this heritage sets the stage for the eight women in my study who have sought certification from the 1970s through the present. The narrative “quilt” that Buford has stitched together is insufficient for an understanding of the present. However, it invites me to follow similar thematic strands with several additional questions. What do I hear from the voices of the women in my study? Do the women pioneers in my study speak of isolation? Do they share the pain of finding their voice and claiming their identity? Do they find networks of support? Do they find themselves becoming closer to God? Do they see the church as an obstacle to their wholeness, to fulfilling their vocation? What or who empowers them? What imagination and courage did they demonstrate that affected the pastoral care training system, whether knowingly or unknowingly?

CHAPTER 3

Approach and Method

In this chapter, I discuss the narrative approaches and methodology for this study and my purpose in using them. As a pastoral educator with feminist, liberation and process theological commitments, I am naturally drawn to relational and narrative theories. My reflection process is grounded in the several theoretical approaches: the qualitative research approach of Clandinin and Connelly¹ and practical application of John Dewey's learning theory;² Robert Kegan's theory human development;³ Christie Cozad Neuger's pastoral approach and interpretation of the narrative theory of White and Epston;⁴ and last but not least, my own theology. The interpretive lens that I use includes relational, experiential, dynamic, and meaning-making thematic components. I entertain these themes in a way that bridges my theological and psychological perspectives.

For several important reasons, I have chosen narrative inquiry as the qualitative research method to reflect upon the narratives emerging from the eight interviews of women ministers/supervisors that I conducted. First and foremost, I find that narrative inquiry provides the theoretical foundation that is most fruitful for reflection on the context in which the narratives are embedded. The contextual perspective is compatible with my research goal of understanding, to the extent possible, women's spiritual journeys through the CPE certification process in light of the social and historical background and patriarchal systems that may have shaped the experience.

¹ Clandinin and Connelly, 40-62.

² Clandinin and Connelly, citing John Dewey, (2-3) — *which Dewey work?*

³ Robert Kegan, The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

⁴ ~~Christie Cozad~~ Neuger, Counseling Women. — *presentation C+C on Dewey?*

Theological Assumptions

I have an underlying theological assumption that each woman minister bears a pastoral identity and self-understanding as a “child or person of God” and seeks to live out her faith and calling toward “the image of God,” encountering God with others through engaging in ministry. This assumption is grounded in my belief that to be fully human is to move toward the image of God. I draw upon the creation stories in Genesis and the story of God’s self-revelation to Moses in the burning bush as “I AM,” stories that bear witness to a power and energy greater than human power (^{Exod.} Exodus 3: 1-17). I also resonate with the writings of Howard Thurman, who underscores the spirituality of being a “child of God” and a person of faith. Being a “child of God” means knowing you belong to and with God and are living that way. “Faith” is a teacher, and faith teaches us that God is love.⁵

As a person of faith, I also understand God as a creative ground to our existence; God is more than and beyond ourselves, encompassing all living beings. Along with process theologians, I believe that God “lures” us toward becoming, in the midst of a relational universe with all of its influences. The “lure” is God’s creative and responsive love, which exerts a persuasive rather than coercive power that is present in the moment and is dynamic and continuous. God’s persuasive power moves us ever toward the likeness or image of God. Pastoral theologian Larry Kent Graham provides an insight about the meaning of “imago Dei” that helps clarify my own vision and how I see this happening in everyday lives of real people. “The likeness of God” refers not to physical appearance, but rather to relationship and activity glimpsed and felt by others and known more fully through authentic presence and actions. Graham stresses that “imago Dei” is not

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confined to gender differentiation and heterosexual reproduction: "Our likeness to God and our full humanity derive from the nature of our partnerships and bonds to one another, God, and the earth."⁶

In her theology, Neuger emphasizes (as Graham does) the significance of the image of God and how it is interpreted. She likes Graham's emphasis on relationships and partnerships and movement away from individualistic interpretations. I agree with Neuger's assumption that unless persons can somehow find themselves reflected in the divine image, it is very difficult for them to experience a sense of partnership in the ongoing work of creation. She emphasizes inclusive concepts and images. Neuger makes a convincing argument that persons and communities may be helped to experience partnership with God by shifting their understanding of the image of God from *who God is* to *who we can become* because of God's love and grace.⁷

What does this mean for the women in my study? Do we/they learn to integrate this love and grace through experience within the context of the pastoral/mentoring relationships in the certification process? What about the CPE community that is responsible for implementing the certification process? Do we/they learn to share this kind of relationship with our students? Is this an expected educational outcome? Where and how do we/they fall short?

These questions are provocative, but I believe that the concept of "relational justice" must be central to this study because its theological and ethical meanings provide a compelling focus for analysis and reflection. Graham defines "relational justice" as the

⁵ Howard Thurman, Deep is the Hunger (Richmond: Friends United Press, 1973), 144.

⁶ Graham, Discovering Images of God, 160.

⁷ Neuger, 57.

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norm for realizing the meaning of love in the image of God.⁸ Neuger applauds Graham's emphasis on relational justice and adds that "being created in the image of God means that human beings are able to engage in a quality of relationship that mirrors God's relationship with humanity."⁹ Graham puts it this way:

Relational justice points to shalom, or rightness of relationship and well-being between creator, creatures, and the people of God, and opposes injustice that takes the forms of coercion, denigration, marginalization, and disvaluation of created life, including human life. Pastoral care, drawing on these theological constructions, therefore assumes and is informed by a liberative ethic and a strategic or prophetic political agenda.¹⁰

Graham calls us to pay attention to the "broken-hearted," to listen intently to the "felt experiences" of those around us with silenced voices, to stay committed to making relational justice. Marjorie Suchoki adds clarity when she says, simply, "insofar as the people become a society of Justice, the image of God is created...insofar as they fall from this ideal, the image is distorted."¹¹ Given our human nature, we will always fall short. Holding ourselves in the CPE community to such a standard would be foolish. Nevertheless, we must examine ourselves and our community and ask, 'where do we fall short?' What are the sinful aspects inherent in the certification process?

Reflection on the work of Graham and Neuger leads me to pose the following questions: *How do I see woman ministers/supervisors who are seeking certification as pastoral educators discuss, interpret, and embody the imago Dei? What is the significance of a woman's faith in her journey through the certification process? How does she understand the efficacy of her relationship with God through the years she is*

⁸ Graham, 12.

⁹ Neuger, 60.

¹⁰ Graham, 12.

¹¹ Marjorie Suchoki, *God, Christ Church: A Practical Guide to Process Theology: A Practical Guide to Process Theology* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1989), 88.) rev. ed.

involved in the process? Does she feel that she has experienced injustice in the forms of coercion, denigration, marginalization, and disvaluation? How does she understand the sinfulness of the CPE community as she engages in the certification process?

Narrative Inquiry as a Method in Qualitative Research

What is narrative inquiry? Clandinin and Connelly heartily acknowledge that “we are in the parade we presume to study.”¹² We are not detached objective observers; rather, we have an experience *of* our experience and there are tensions and dilemmas in studying the parade of which we are a part. Narrative inquiry is relational, so tension is inevitable. Relationships in every day life have an ebb and flow of closeness and distance, but a relational inquiry is different. Clandinin and Connelly argue that researchers must become fully involved, “must ‘fall in love’ with their participants, yet must also step back and see their own stories in the inquiry, the stories of the participants, and the larger landscape on which they all live.”¹³ I have adopted this approach in my study with the women ministers/supervisors: I seek to understand them in their context, to understand my own experience going through the certification process, and to reflect on my experience of their experience and the larger landscape on which we all live.

A narrative, as I understand it, includes everything that a subject of an interview has expressed about herself and her situations in the interview. Narrative is thickly woven out of a number of strands, which include the telling and retelling of the story, the interaction of social milieus in which both interviewer and interviewee are involved, and the interpersonal dimension of the interviewer’s listening. Narrative is a broad category that

¹² D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, 81.

¹³ Ibid.

provides the larger context of which story is part. Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. According to Clandinin and Connelly:

It is a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, in a social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in this same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social.¹⁴

Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives

My study focuses on the learning process for each of the women as they sought supervisory training and certification. The personal and professional growth that occurs in this process is inevitably painful, but can also be gratifying. I am interested in how we teach and learn in CPE, and therefore my research method, like Clandinin and Connelly's, needs to be a helpful approach for probing into the teaching-learning process. Using the narrative inquiry method in the field of educational studies, Clandinin and Connelly ground their research in the learning theory of John Dewey.

Dewey, known for his theory of education, is the primary influence on the thinking of Clandinin and Connelly and on the types of questions and issues they raise for research. Dewey wrote about the nature of *experience* as both personal and social, which provided Clandinin and Connelly with the key concept for inquiry that permits better understandings of learning and the practice of education. Simply stated, "narrative inquiry is stories lived and told."¹⁵ For Dewey, persons cannot be understood solely as individuals; they are always in relation, always in a social context.¹⁶ This notion helps Clandinin and Connelly develop and refine appropriate research questions directed toward understanding of the subject of their study. For example, they examine issues in

¹⁴ Ibid., 20.

¹⁵ Ibid.

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an individual's learning, but also understand that learning takes place with others – with a teacher, in a classroom with other students, in a family, in a community, and in a culture.¹⁷

Another key concept for Dewey was *continuity*. According to Clandinin and Connelly, Dewey held that experience has a continuous nature. Namely, experiences grow out of other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences. There is a continuum of experience and “wherever one positions oneself in that continuum – the imagined now, some imagined past, or some imagined future – each point has a past experiential base and leads to an experiential future.”¹⁸ This concept is key to the educational research thinking of Clandinin and Connelly. For example, their study of a child's learning, a school, or a particular policy is framed by the concept that there is always a history that is ever changing and going somewhere. I view the certification process as aligned with the idea of life-long learning and adult development, and learning does not stop at the end of the certification process. Rather, the design of supervisory training and how students experience their training ought to build the supervisory student's capacity for learning. Ideally, as the student fulfills the certification requirements and meets committees, etc., she engages in a learning process that increases her capacity to fulfill her unique potential as a supervisor. Learning would, as a result, increase through continuity and through depth and breadth of knowing and being, all of which would fuel a lifelong educational process.

¹⁶ Clandinin and Connelly citing Dewey, 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Clandinin and Connelly,

Source
Dewey, 2

I share the use of the qualitative research method with scholars in a variety of fields who have discovered its merits in providing a corrective to less contextual approaches.

Clandinin and Connelly comment on the use of narrative inquiry in other social science fields and how this method contributes to growing and changing knowledge in these fields. They particularly note the extent to which the use of narrative inquiry in research has moved from the margins of established inquiry traditions to becoming an established method. Educational researchers of many different persuasions claim to use narrative, and critiques of this method often come from those who do not use it.¹⁹

Clandinin and Connelly offer notable examples of narrative inquiry in the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, and psychiatry: Clifford Geertz, After the Fact; Mary Catherine Bateson, Peripheral Visions; Norman Denzin, Interpretive Ethnography; Donald Polkinghorne, Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences; Robert Coles, The Call of Stories; and Roy Schafer, Retelling a Life.²⁰ A work of immediate relevance to this study, Carolyn Heilbrun's Writing a Woman's Life, is one of several examples of narrative inquiry used in the humanities.²¹ I find that Arthur W. Frank's The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness and Ethics is a noteworthy attempt to use autobiographical and literary sources to form narrative inquiry that speaks to the field of bio-ethics.²²

¹⁹ Ibid., 4.

²⁰ Clifford Geertz, After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); Mary Catherine Bateson, Peripheral Visions: Learning Along the Way (New York: HarperCollins, 1994); Norman Denzin, Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1997); Donald Polkinghorne, Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); Robert Coles, The Call of Stories: Teaching and the Moral Imagination (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989); Roy Schafer, Retelling a Life: Narrative and Dialogue in Psychoanalysis (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

²¹ Carolyn Heilbrun, Writing a Woman's Life (New York: Ballantine, 1989).

²² Arthur W. Frank, The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness, and Ethics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

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Interpretive Ethnography!

Certain proponents of narrative methods for research on aging and adult development have pointed out that traditional research approaches that measure formalistic categories have been critiqued as being primarily motivated by the urge to explain and predict, and the motive to describe and understand has received less attention. Such methods do not provide an adequate understanding of the subject of study, and the view is lopsided.²³ We gain an “outsider’s” view rather than an “insider’s” view, and we learn very little about aging from such research. Theoretical positions that view the subject from the “outside,” analyzing and using formal categories to explain and predict, are not useful for understanding a person and that person’s human experience in a social context.²⁴ Feminist theory takes a similar position and has critiqued methods that attempt or perpetuate social control.

Narrative Theory and Pastoral Theology

Narrative theory has contributed to practical therapeutic approaches and counseling theory. Neuger developed a narrative pastoral approach for her work in counseling women. Neuger bases her counseling theory on the work of White and Epston. They begin their narrative theory with the presumption that, in striving to make sense of life, “persons face the task of arranging their experiences of events in sequences across time in such a way as to arrive at a coherent account of themselves and the world around them.”²⁵ Past and present experiences are connected and projected into the future to create an account referred to as personal story or self-narrative.

²³ Jan- Erik Ruth and Gary Kenyon, “Biography in Adult Development and Aging” Aging and Biography: Explorations in Adult Development (New York: Springer Publishing, 1996), 1.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Neuger, 53.

Narrative theory posits that a number of sub-narratives are developed over time, as life is lived, and the sub-narratives “thicken” the story. The thicker the story, however, the more difficult it is for people to notice differences in the sub-narratives, which makes it hard to question or to deconstruct their narrative. In her pastoral counseling theory, Neuger suggests that problems become strands in the story that can be identified and deconstructed through sensitive listening. Pain from problems can motivate people. Amidst their pain around a problematic strand of their story, clients can be helped to notice exceptions to the strands of narrative that generate and maintain a problem. In other words they can find other meaningful themes in their story. With insight, then, a new narrative strand can be created from these identified exceptions. After “deconstructive listening” has created a gap in the story for the exceptions to be lifted out, the weaving of a new meaning making makes the preferred life possible.

How are the women in my study able to engage in the pain that is inevitably unearthed in them through the CPE supervisory certification process? The process includes continual and often troubling feedback from peers, supervisors, and committee, and the feedback points to their problems and limitations in order to assess and promote emotional maturity and professional development. Then how are these women able to weave new strands into their stories that make the preferred life and desired outcome possible? How do they handle their pain use it creatively?

Human Development and the Evolving Self

In his theory of human development, Robert Kegan discusses the self as an evolving self, primarily concerned with meaning and the ongoing tension between self-

preservation and self-transformation.²⁶ Kegan understands human development and the formation of personality from a biological perspective that is not deterministic and body-based but is open-ended and concerned with a conception of the life force itself and how humans figure in it. This way of conceptualizing evolution is less androcentric than psychoanalytic theories such as Erickson's stages of development.²⁷ It does not place an energy system within us so much as it places us in a single energy system shared by all living things. In light of this idea, Kegan invites us to consider that the evolutionary motion is the fundamental, grounding phenomenon in personality. *What does Kegan mean by evolutionary motion? What dynamic is he talking about, and how is his theory helpful in understanding the women in this project?*

Kegan's theory is important because it provides, I think, a deeper source of hope for humanity than other theories of human development do. Kegan builds his theory on Piaget's insights and thinks that human development involves an ongoing evolutionary conversation between the individuating organism and the world. The motion at the core of our being involves a process of adaptation that is shaped by the inherent tension between the assimilation of new experience to old "grammar," and the accommodation of old grammar to new experience. While engaging in this adapting/accommodating activity, we also experience it, and Kegan proposes that experience may well be the source of our emotions.

Loss and recovery, separation and attachment, anxiety and play, depression and transformation, disintegration and coherence---all may owe their origins to the felt experience of this activity, this motion to which the word "emotion" refers. I use the word "meaning" to refer to this simultaneously epistemological and

²⁶ Kegan, 45.

²⁷ Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton, 1963).

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ontological activity; it is about knowing and being, about theory making and investments and commitments of the self.²⁸

For Kegan, meaning making is a dynamic, evolutionary activity that involves periods of stability, of instability, and of balance---the striking of an evolutionary truce. Meaning making is simultaneously about knowing, being, and emotion and is as basic to human beings as life itself. Kegan sees development not as biological adaptation the way the evolutionary biologist would see it, but rather as being “very exercises of hope.”²⁹ He poses a fascinating set of questions that have shaped my in-depth thinking about the subjects of my study.

Might we better understand others in their predicament if we if we could somehow know how their way of living reflects the state of their hoping at this depth?—not the hopes they have or the hoping they do, but the hopes and hoping they are?³⁰

How do the women in my study make meaning and how do they experience their emotions in the certification process? How does their living during the certification process reflect their hopes and hoping about whom they desire, in their depths, to become?

Are hoping, meaning-making, and change related? Wendy Drewery and John Winslade point out that change is possible because people make meaning; meaning is not made for us. They highlight the strength of human agency in the process of human development despite the impact of culture and the world:

This simple statement contains a wealth of implications. It puts people in the driving seat of their lives; we produce the meanings of our lives. Certainly, the way we speak and the things we speak about are a part of our cultural heritage; they are handed down to us, and they are our tools for making sense.³¹

²⁸ Robert Kegan, 44-45.

²⁹ Ibid., 45.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

The certification process involves a great deal of personal change amidst pressures to assimilate and to conform to the CPE culture. *How have the women in my study been in the driver's seat, steering toward their own development? What obstacles or impasses have they met?*

Preparing to Hear the Stories as an Interviewer

I reviewed pastoral and feminist models that involved similar commitments with reflection on narratives generated through interviews. Journal reflections helped me to clarify what stance I would take as an interviewer. In one journal entry, I wrote, "to hear, one must prepare oneself to listen. Pastoral care is *first* the preparation to listen for the purpose of hearing another's soul." Hearing the soul, I believe, means hearing the other's truth in and beyond the words. I meditated on what this practice would require of me.

I interacted with the writings of other pastoral care providers and theologians to hear from them how they prepared themselves for an interview. Graham's approach provided guidance, especially his description of pastoral and theological activity as being deeply engaged in "sustained listening." He emphasizes that for this quality of listening the listener needs to exercise "restraint in the face of ambiguity and conflict."³² Like Graham, I believe that stories have no parallel in their power to convey emotional meaning and the presence of God. When we tell our stories, we can reclaim our lives.³³ Yet we can only tell our story to someone who wants to hear it. Telling and listening are mutually interdependent activities that hinge upon subjects who are willing to be open to the demands and risks of both. My being able to understand and adopt the quality of "sustained listening" in the face of ambiguity and conflict is of crucial importance to this

³² Graham, 1.

³³ This page

Discouraging Images (?)

study. I hope that I offered sustained listening to each woman interviewed despite the limitations of geographic distance and other factors.

I reflected on my research goal and on what I wanted to learn from the women. For the most part, the journal served as a spiritual discipline that helped me include the study in my prayer life and maintain a meditative aspect to the process. As an interviewer, I saw myself as not entitled to the women's stories but nevertheless privileged to have the stories shared with me. As a learner who sought to learn from the women as individuals and as a group, I approached them with an attitude of respect.

I was interested in the intersection between the women's perceptions of their lives and identity and how they felt they were treated as up-and-coming supervisors. How did their interactions with certification committees affect identity, self-esteem or self-image, and their ability to define who they are. The question that Josselson asks in her study of women's identity intrigues me: *"How does a woman come to be who she is—with what consideration, what anguish, what commitment, and with what regret?"*³⁴ Josselson offers a fruitful question for considering what each woman's story tells of the change required of her in the course of the certification process.

Another use of the journal was to identify and elaborate my assumptions, of which I had to be aware if my listening and hearing were to be effective. *Did I assume that all of the women would feel that the current system for certification was abusive? What symbolic language would the women use to describe it? Was certification more like a "rite of passage," or was it an "entitlement"?* My journal work specifically addressed my

³³ Ibid., 10-11.

³⁴ Ruthellen Josselson, Revising Herself: The Story of Women's Identity From College to Midlife (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 32-33.

motivation for doing this project, and I explored certain questions: *What is my personal investment in this project? Am I testing the waters to see if they safe? Am I hoping I will learn something that will help me succeed in the process? Do I seek to provide an avenue for healing for those who were wounded during the process?*

Some measure of truth lies in all of these motivations. However, I am primarily driven toward truth, not success. This journal entry clarifies my approach as a researcher: "I am led to looking at systems, mentoring relationships, internal struggles and wounds, wounding in the certification process, healing, community support, and vocational call from God. I am looking for stories that speak of truth and wholeness not success."

Setting the Stage

To understand the current professional context of the women interviewed, it is helpful to see the numbers of women in ACPE and a comparison with the number of men. I will also briefly discuss the structure of ACPE and the type of ministry settings. A current statistical profile of ACPE reveals the number of CPE training programs and the number of active supervisors in each region.³⁵ There are 32 certified supervisors for 23 centers in the Northeast Region (9 women); 63 supervisors for 63 centers in the Eastern Region (24 women); 68 supervisors for 36 centers in the Mid-Atlantic Region (23 women); 80 supervisors for 43 centers in the Southeast Region (24 women); 59 supervisors for 36 centers in the East Central Region (13 women); 78 supervisors for 75 centers in the North Central Region (25 women); 43 supervisors for 30 centers in the South Central Region (10 women); 61 supervisors for 42 centers in the Southwest Region (13); and 42

³⁵ Statistical data were collected from information presented in The ACPE Directory 2002-2003, Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (Decatur, Georgia. *Ma. ACPE, year*). 

supervisors for 38 centers in the Pacific Region (16 women).³⁶ Among the supervisors listed in the directory, 369 are men and 157 are women. Only 29.8% of supervisors are women. Nationwide, there are 526 certified supervisors and 386 centers that offer CPE training.

A national office for ACPE keeps records and functions administratively to support the leadership of national commissions and committees. The national organization is divided into nine regions that govern themselves in accordance with national standards and policies. These nine regions in the country have 21 different types of institutional settings in which CPE training is offered: general hospital, multi-institution center, children's hospital, psychiatric hospital, community mental health center, counseling center, adult correctional center, juvenile correctional center, parish, developmentally disabled/mental health center, geriatric facility, rehabilitation center, Veterans Affairs hospital, military center, alcohol ^{and} drug addiction center, community organization, hospice, pastoral care agency, campus ministry, theological seminary, and university-related training. For ACPE members involved in the highly work-intensive certification process and the accreditation reviews of CPE centers, demands in terms of volunteer time and commitment are significant.

Selection Process

How did I go about selecting the women to interview? I personally chose five of the eight women because I knew them somewhat through professional contacts. Of the women I knew, one of the women and I had done some training together, and I had known her well at that time. I selected one woman who had left the certification process.

³⁶ The directory lists the name of the supervisor(s) next to each center. An unknown number of associate supervisors are included in this statistic. While associate supervisors are completely autonomous,

Of the women I did not know, female colleagues referred two women. I selected one woman at random from the ACPE directory, still in the certification process as an associate supervisor. The interviewed women had received their supervisory training in different regions of the country. As to religious affiliation, all of the women were Christian, and three were from the same denomination. The other five each represented different denominations, both Protestant and Roman Catholic. Five of the women represented marginalized communities; there were three lesbian women and two women of color.

I contacted the women by phone and informed them of the project, telling them that I was conducting a study of women supervisors that would include reflection on their stories relate to the certification process. I indicated that I wanted to talk with them about participating in the study. To provide the women with some background, I discussed my thesis and why I was interested in doing the study. I described the preparation I had been doing to help me hear each story, which included reading the work of Paula Buford on the historical background of women in pastoral care training systems and reflecting on feminist themes in theology and women's stories. I also acknowledged my interest in being able to put my own story in perspective with other women's stories.

In this exploratory discussion, I also answered questions about the number and type of questions that I would be asking. The interview would be structured as open-ended and would be taped. I reviewed the size and diversity of the participant group, my confidentiality agreement and statement of ethics, and an authorization form to tape-record the session.³⁷ I offered to send each participant the accepted Doctor of Ministry

they have another step to complete to become fully certified.

³⁷ See Appendix Z.

proposal, and all but one person asked for a copy. All of these materials and the interview questions were faxed immediately afterward. Everyone whom I asked agreed to participate in the study, which was rather amazing given the time constraints that most supervisors endure. Before our interview, I encouraged each woman to think about what she might want to gain from telling her story. At the beginning of the actual interview, I offered a brief introduction that preceded the first question.³⁸ The introduction represented a deliberate effort on my part to maintain the interest and energy generated in our earlier conversation and to build a supportive climate for the interview.

Choice of Design and Procedure

I chose to conduct all of the interviews by telephone, planning approximately an hour and a half for each interview. The interviews tape-recorded and later transcribed. The structured, open-ended interview format involved a specific set of sensitizing questions that the interviewees had been given to review before the interview session. The sensitizing questions were not designed to be formal questions to be answered during interview; rather they were intended as informal prompts that would “prime the pump” and guide the interview. I designed the questions based on the “sensitizing questions” used in the work of ^{James} Birren and ^{Donna} Deutchman with guided autobiography groups.³⁹

Sensitizing questions are meant to facilitate recall and reflection, designed to guide but not limit or direct thinking. They help define and clarify the kinds of life events and issues that are important. For example, a series of brief guiding questions asked on a particular subject can help persons explore aspects of their life histories that are

³⁸ See Appendix ~~J~~ ^A

³⁹ James E. Birren and Donna E. Deutchman, Guiding Autobiography Groups for Older Adults: Exploring the Fabric of Life (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 63-66.

emotionally salient and meaningful for increased self-understanding. My practical reason for employing sensitizing questions in this study is that they strengthen recall.⁴⁰ As Birren notes, “the questions bring to mind stories, personalities, emotions and events from the past that otherwise might be forgotten.”⁴¹ I also used this method because, in my experience, it is a safe and comfortable framework.⁴² The use of sensitizing questions encourages participants to proceed into deeper and deeper territory by allowing them to do so in stages.⁴³ Some recall involves emotionally powerful material. With the guidance of sensitizing questions, however, participants are able to assess their own level of comfort and share what is desired, or withhold information that they do not want to share.

Interview Focus

The sensitizing questions that the women received in advance of the interview were clustered around specific aspects of their personal story and the certification process.⁴⁴ I began with questions to help them revisit their lives at the beginning of the certification process because I assumed that for most of the women, if not all, entering certification was a significant branching point in their lives. My definition of “branching points” comes from Birren’s description; they are “events, experiences or happenings in our lives that significantly effect the direction or flow of our life.”⁴⁵

To help the women remember what it was like to begin certification, I asked them to reflect on important events, experiences, relationships, and interactions with people and place that had a major impact at that time. I also asked a general question about an overall

⁴⁰ Ibid., 64.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² I have participated as a student in a guided autobiography group using this method.

⁴³ (bid), 66.

⁴⁴ See Appendix X. A

⁴⁵ Birren, 68.

Do you mean
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Ibid. means
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42 you cite yourself

and Deutchman,

description of their personal journey related to the certification process. The second cluster of questions was a companion to the first. These questions were designed to facilitate recovery of the hopes and dreams the women had at the time of entering into the ministry of CPE supervision and their sense of the strength of their vocational call.

The third set of questions focused on relationships with mentors. I was keenly interested in understanding how the women were able to grow and develop within these critical supervisory relationships. My questions were informed by the premise posed by social scientist Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot that the experience of respect is central for healthy growth and development, and I sought to evoke the women's perceptions of the respect they were accorded. Lawrence-Lightfoot developed her paradigm in her work on the significance of respect in the context of asymmetrical power in professional relationships, and I adapted it to this study.⁴⁶ The paradigm provides a framework of meaning for interpreting one's felt experience of respect in the context of vulnerability and power in the relationship. How did the person with more power in the relationship (the training supervisor) convey respect given the vulnerability of the person with less power in the relationship (the woman supervisee)?

I outlined six different dimensions where respect or lack of respect might be demonstrated and asked about each of them. (1) Empowering/not empowering: did the supervisory relationship help you discover strength and energy for the work? (2) Healing/wounding: did the supervisory relationship help you on your journey toward wholeness? (3) Encouraging dialogue/discouraging dialogue: did the supervisory relationship help you to develop your voice and did you find openness to hearing other

⁴⁶ Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, 9-13.

voices? (4) Deeply curious about motivation/not curious about motivation: did the supervisory relationship help you to be more curious about yourself and want to know more of who you are? (5) Models self-respect/does not model self-respect: did the supervisory relationship help you to learn how to respect yourself? 6) Attentive as a “watchful witness”/not attentive as a “watchful witness”: did the supervisory relationship help you to “see yourself whole” and be more honest with yourself?

The next cluster of questions focused on the woman’s interior experience of the process. These questions were designed to get at the struggles, impasses, and traumatic events she encountered and how she attempted to move through them. How did the woman discover support and resources at those difficult points, and what were the highpoints in her experience? Following these was a set of questions designed to explore the women’s understanding of the influence of their spirituality, changes they experienced in that area, and the significance of their spiritual resources for them.

The sixth set of questions was designed to elicit experiences of the formal institutional structures in the ACPE certification process (for example, the supervisory training model and the steps toward certification) and how the organization functioned. The next group of questions focused on systems, issues of power, and sensitivity to diversity. A general question explored how the women perceived power issues and gave a framework to interpret their experience of organizational structures. For example, were the structures fair and just, open and accessible, oppressive and devaluing, permissive of abuse and exploitation? The final set of questions was designed to help the women reflect on CPE as a particular culture and its significance in shaping them. Among this set of

questions, I included an inquiry about the role that CPE students play in the culture that has shaped the women.

The following paragraph served as an introduction to the sensitizing questions. My intent was to convey professionalism and respect in a way that would build a rapport between us.

These questions are designed with the hope of engaging you in your story in a fresh way. They are meant to build for the purpose of tweaking your memory and sparking your creative imagination. It is not necessary to answer all the questions, rather let them lead you into sharing your story in the interview. Use them to jot down notes to serve as reminders, if you wish. Consider what the benefits are for you in sharing your story through participating in this interview, and what you would like to gain. You will also need to decide for yourself what you do not want to happen, and discuss any concerns you have with me before the interview.⁴⁷

From our first conversations, I discovered that all of the women were curious about the project and interested in the final outcome. After I explained the project, I heard the following comments: “Sounds interesting.” “What kind of a response are you getting?” One woman said, “When am I going to carve out the time?” After hearing some of the sensitizing questions, one woman commented frankly, “I can tell this is going to be hard. I still have unresolved pain. Maybe that is not unusual.” (I agreed that I, too, thought that the interview could be painful.) “I would like to do it.” Another woman said, “Maybe it would help me to go at it from a new way at this point.”

The stories that follow are arranged chronologically, beginning with the date each woman entered the certification process. The stories of two women who were not fully certified fall in among the other stories. To protect the identity of the study participants, I have maintained the anonymity of each woman and have carefully disguised certain parts

⁴⁷ See Appendix X.

of their stories. Because I called the women by their first names during the interviews, I have chosen a pseudonym for them in these narratives in order to maintain the personal dimension of their stories.

CHAPTER 4

1970s 1980s

Women in the 70s and 80s

1970s

The following three stories are of women who began training in the 70s, and were certified in the 70s and 80s.

1970s 1980s

"Anne"

Anne describes herself as one who took a lot of responsibility at a young age after her mother died. Her father, who was a rather passive and dependent kind of person, was not very active or present. Anne said, "So I just had taken charge myself, of my life and relationships, and things like that." "While I would not articulate this as my theology, in practice I kind of lived as though God was a nice guy but what can he do here?" Despite this image of God, Anne entered seminary in the early 1960's, the first woman in the Masters of Divinity program at that school. Her denomination supported her and ordained her; Anne was the first woman to be fully ordained in her region. Anne told me, "It has been a long journey of being the only woman, the first and only woman in that process. And I never heard another woman preach until I had a woman student in CPE that led chapel services." She continued, "All my supervisors in the whole CPE process were male, all my peers were male, and all the committee members that I met along the way were male."

Anne found her first parish assignment to be a "very isolating experience." A counseling center in the community "invited some of the local clergy to volunteer two to four hours a week to do counseling in the center, and in return they provided you with training for that and supervision." The CPE supervisor who provided the training gave Anne her first real exposure to the CPE method of training. "And that really excited me,

the process of reflection on experience and integrating who you are with your ministry,” recalled Anne. The taste of that experience drew Anne to pursue a unit of CPE and then apply for a residency at a vital CPE Center with a number of students, supervisors, and supervisors-in-training. In 1971, she left all her family and friends and moved across the country to a place where she knew “absolutely no one.”

At age 33, Anne went through a major life transition when she entered her CPE residency. Although starting anew was demanding, Anne set about building from scratch relationships and some sense of community. She found excellent support among her CPE colleagues, both supervisors and other students. She recalled that many of them lived in the same community and did things together socially as well as professionally. Anne reported to me that she discovered “a nice sense of support and community in the process there, with others who were going through supervisory training at the same site.” Anne was happy with her training situation.

Anne also remembers that the certification process at that time was much different than it is today. She was able to begin her training as a supervisor in the last unit of her residency, when she was encouraged to observe her supervisor supervise the group; during that unit, she provided individual supervision for two of the students in the group. Anne had no committee to meet or papers to write until she went before a committee for certification as an acting supervisor. Anne was certified in 1973, the year following her residency. She had heard “war stories” of smoke-filled rooms and meetings of candidates around the bar, but she also thought that such activity had ceased just prior to her entering supervisory training. Anne acknowledged that she received a lot of support from men

through the certification process and that she experienced her region as a leader the stands it took in support of women and gay and lesbian participants in CPE.

Anne remembers that an important part of her journey in CPE began as she explored feminist issues. “Around the time I was entering supervisory training, I was becoming more aware of feminist issues and looking for places where I could begin dialogue with others.” Anne found such dialogue to be difficult because there were no other women in supervisory training or women supervisors anywhere nearby. Anne reached out to women who had been CPE students in the area, gathered them together, and started a weekly meeting. This group of women played a very significant in Anne’s development; it was a “real core support group” for the women, a forum where they could share their experiences as women in CPE programs. Anne told me, “That’s where I began to really look at who I was as a woman in ministry and how a lot of what I had become had been shaped by the male influence, male theology. And I began to experience some of the anger that came with that realization.”

The time that followed was “a very expensive, yet challenging” period for Anne. Her anger fueled attempts to work for constructive changes in the ways CPE programs related to women students and to those women who were then coming through the process as supervisors. Anne’s informal group of women looked for opportunities to educate, and they collaborated to plan continuing education workshops and conferences for CPE supervisors and for other women in CPE on the issues they had been discussing. For three or four years, this group planned local, regional, and national training opportunities. Some of the initial group continued to work and provide support for one another over that time. Even though Anne describes herself as being very much of an introvert who

“managed to survive without a lot of support,” there was a richness in the quality of relationships that she valued and that nurtured her. Anne attributes this richness to the way the women handled their meetings -- more like support groups than planning meetings. “We were not as focused on ‘we’ve got to get business done’ as on our relationships in the process. And that was very meaningful to me.”

With this energy, Anne searched in the ACPE directory for other women supervisors across the country and wrote to them, inviting them to meet for conversation as a group at the National Conference in 1973. Anne was very disappointed when she got no response; she had hoped to bring some of the sharing she had experienced with women in her area and develop a similar group on a national level. Anne’s intention was to develop a base for considering issues from a national perspective such changes in the certification process, changes that the local women’s group believed warranted more support. Anne held on to “one piece of hope” when she met one of the women she had invited at the national conference and learned that the woman would have liked to meet but had not gotten around to responding. “The next year,” Anne recalled, “we were able to make an announcement in the newsletter ahead of time for both women students and women supervisors in CPE to meet.” Anne expressed gratitude when she noted the change that has occurred since that time in the ^{1970s.} 1970’s. She told me that the women’s gathering at the national level started with a group of about 25 who met in a hotel room and has now expanded to fill a whole banquet room. Anne reflected, “That’s magnificent to think that has happened.”

Anne recalled that it was helpful that “some of the old-timers who had been in leadership positions were the ones who also supported us.” Not all Anne’s efforts to bring

constructive change at the national level met with support, however. Anne tells the story of her efforts to get funding for a “Women in CPE Newsletter.”

Male supervisors were asking us to help them learn what the issues are for women in CPE. We were arguing that we needed some way to communicate with each other and build a base of understanding around those issues in order to respond to what the men were asking of us. We thought a newsletter would be a good way of doing that where we could share articles and information and news.

Anne remembers some of the stereotypes she heard from men in leadership positions who opposed the newsletter. One said that he had “talked to his wife and she said that women didn’t need that.” Another man respond to the women asserting their desire for a newsletter by saying he was in touch with his feminine side because he could knit. Anne and I shared a few chuckles together around these memories. What really upset Anne was when the newsletter proposal, which had already been approved by the appropriate committee, was stifled because the executive and the committee chair decided that women were a “special interest,” and ACPE did not have funds for special interest groups. Not receiving organizational support did not stop the women from developing the newsletter, but they sensed that they were perceived as a dangerous group and the organization needed to be safeguarded. Anne said, “We were not that outrageous. Trying to work within the system to speak to the system.”

Anne described that her spiritual journey grew deeper during the time she was in the certification process. “It was both a combination of experiential theological reflection that I got excited about in CPE,” Anne said, “and the emerging feminist literature and work with the women... that really deepened my own relationship with God and theology, and helped it feel more alive and real for me.” Anne’s relationship with her denomination was solid, but she had a variety of experiences with the church, some supportive and

inclusive, some not. It was a real challenge for her church judicatory to appoint a woman to any kind of ministry. “When I first came out of seminary as the first woman to be a full member, in some ways it felt like a relief that I had found my own work, and didn’t require anything from the church.” However, when her church called together a task force at the national level to redesign the way they served the chaplains in her denomination, Anne was asked to be on it. She appreciated participating and felt much more a part of the national church. She also worked part-time in the field education part of a seminary program, which gave Anne an opportunity to help women reflect on their ministry and their internship settings. Through all of these experiences, Anne discovered a personal relationship with a God who journeyed with her and entered into covenant with her. A God, she said, who “called me into accountability about who I am, and who I am in relationship with others in creation.” “My relationship with God became a much more meaningful part of my life.”

Anne shared that she felt that both of her supervisors respected her highly. One of her supervisors was very active and engaging. He worked out of an existential model that Anne appreciated. Learning came out of the “aha!” moments arising out of her experiences. Anne remarked, “he had a real art for helping me live with my own experiences to come to those “aha!” moments myself.”

He was there sort of nurturing that process in me without being in the way of it happening by trying to guide it or direct it in some way for me. I experienced that as tremendously helpful; in fact, he’s had the strongest influence on my own model of supervision today through that process.

Anne found her other supervisor to be less responsive, but she was particularly touched by his support of her on the day of her certification committee appearance; he pulled out his musical instrument and started to play to soothe her. When she was in the

throes of preparing for the committee, she had commented to him that his playing was comforting to her, a comment he remembered and acted upon.

Anne also remembered the support she received with writing her theory papers. She arranged for a meeting to present her papers for review, and when the time came she had nothing written. The supportive experience that followed with the supervisors and supervisors-in-training helped her get over a hump and free herself to write her papers. Concepts began to make sense to her and come together in terms of theory, theology, and experience; this was “tremendously exciting that this was real stuff, not stuff from books.” Anne shared a concern that the current certification process may lead those who are learning supervision toward books as the first source for their theory rather than developing theory out of the real stuff of experience.

Anne’s first real encounter with power issues occurred when she met the certification committee for both acting and full supervisor.

I had laid out a model of authority based on a collegial model of authority in which I made the case that learning best occurs in a setting where it is recognized that all persons come to the experience with an authority of their own life story, experiences, their education, and that the best learning occurs when that can be tapped from the whole peer group. And the supervisors come with their own authority and experience and education as well. The certification committee had a real hard time understanding that. I kept hearing things like, ‘Well, somebody has to be in charge.’ That this just wouldn’t work. They were used to working with a much more hierarchical model.

Anne thinks that enough women have now come through that certification committees today are more sensitive to these kinds of models of authority, but there are exceptions. Speaking of her own supervisors, Anne did not perceive them to be hierarchical in their exercise of authority. Their power in relation to her was not hurtful or stifling, but enabling.

Anne had the benefit of working with a training supervisor who occupied key leadership positions within the ACPE organization. He was instrumental in trying to “develop a coherent model for supervisory training rather than each person going by the seat of their pants.” Anne learned from his efforts to develop a curriculum for supervisory training, “that was probably among the first in the country.” As he was working on the curriculum, he could interpret some of the process for her and helped her to see the larger picture. She recognized that others might not have this opportunity. Part of the problem, Anne pointed out, was that CPE was not functioning with any standardized set of understandings. There were a lot of issues still being worked out among individuals who had come into ACPE from the Institute of Pastoral Care and the Council for Clinical Training, who had been “doing things their way, and continued to do it their way.” For example, when Anne served on the national certification committee, they wrestled with the question, “What is it that we’re looking at when we’re evaluating a person for certification?” Different regions had different sets of ideas. The lack of consistent expectations raised strong ethical issues. Anne identified some of the old confrontational models of supervision as a particular concern. She also discussed the heavy emphasis on therapeutic models compared to educational models for supervision. Supervisory models varied within and among the different regions of ACPE and also from supervisor to supervisor. Anne concluded that she thinks that now there is a more unified sense within ACPE, with some variations, and the extremes are not as prominent now as they were when Anne was certified.

Anne was very active on the national level in her own right. She consulted with national committees and met with the executive team to raise or to interpret women’s

issues in CPE and to bring forward proposals for change. She became well acquainted with the structures and how best to advocate for changes in the structure. For instance, Anne and her women colleagues were able to win recognition that a woman appearing before a certification committee needed to have at least one other woman on the committee and that a woman candidate had a right to request that a woman be on the committee. Anne recalled, “some of those things along the way got enacted; others didn’t. But a lot of the things we were advocating for at that point are in practice.” Anne reflected on her experience as a change agent, “My guess is it’s more the attitudinal issues than the structure, but I think there are some things that could be changed about the structure...that would be helpful for everybody.”

“Maureen”

Maureen was at a major transition point in her early 30’s because she had just completed three years of team ministry in two large Roman Catholic parishes. She felt that she was at bottom, wondering what she was doing in parish ministry when she had so little authority and was so vulnerable in terms of her pastoral identity, and perhaps even her personal identity. She reflected, “Of course I couldn’t articulate any of that then. But now as I look back, that’s what probably prompted me into training.” Maureen had an initial unit of CPE in 1972 and recalled how she decided to go further with CPE: “I was in a city that had no CPE program and was in the hospital as a patient and felt like the pastoral care was atrocious.” That motivated her to work on a committee to establish a CPE center, and a supervisor from another city came to consult with the committee. Maureen soon learned that a residency opening was available at his center. The timing

was right, since her other ministry had ended and she was looking for the next opportunity.

The transition was difficult and lonely, however. Maureen was a member of a religious community, and for the first time she was moving far away from her community of Catholic sisters and “going solo.” She had to work hard at establishing relationships and did not find it easy to establish a sense of community. She realized how much she had relied on her community for support and things to do. Maureen shared with me, “I think those were real significant life circumstances,” and she added, “I recall that being a very lonely time for me.”

When I asked Maureen to describe her attraction to the particular ministry and vocational direction of CPE supervision, she said there were a couple of significant things for her.

In my tradition, I am not ordained; hence to be a chaplain lent itself to a pastoral identity which I did not have within my own church at that time; and probably still today. So when I entered residency, I became a chaplain and was identified as such, began to feel the authority of that, *that* was very attractive. I think supervision provided me a way to stay in hospital ministry-chaplaincy. *That* was very attractive. And I was at a point where I was looking at what the next thing was. I’d done several things professionally before that, but was looking for something that would interest me for a length of time. And, *I have found it*.

The ministry of being with people in crisis is enlivening and satisfying for Maureen, and she has always liked being on-call for emergencies. She feels called to be with students who are developing their own pastoral identity and their own styles of ministry. She enjoys mentoring and being a part of the growth and development of young people.

Maureen describes her supervisory relationships as “yin and yang,” quite the opposite from one another, and yet, complimentary. She told me that she never had a woman supervisor and always wondered what that was like. She only knew of about three

women supervisors in the early stages of her CPE journey and made only passing efforts to get acquainted. Maureen did her first supervisory training during the last part of her residency; she remembers working very hard to survive and feeling quite threatened with her residency supervisor. She described her residency experience as being very confrontive. As a result, Maureen learned to be confrontive herself and to charge ahead and get herself certified. “I didn’t have to be intimidated by any of my committees after that, acting or full, and never had to repeat any of those,” she affirmed but added, “I think I’m a much different supervisor than that.”

Maureen’s supervisory training supervisor was the opposite of confrontational. She experienced him as “much more empowering, much more believing in my ability than I believed myself.” He encouraged Maureen by example, opening up about himself in seminar and talking about his stories, which “somehow gave me an avenue to look at my own story and begin talking about that.” This supervisor gave Maureen a scare, however, when he informed her during her first supervisory hour that he had never supervised a woman in supervisory training before, and he didn’t know how to do that. Maureen remembers that comment as reawakening a painful sense of being by herself – very lonely and very needy – much as she had been the first time she moved to begin her journey with CPE. As time went on, however, Maureen observed, “I was able to sort of let go of some of the compulsive rigidity of the first residency and give myself to development and exploration, and believe... was able to be empowered to claim the fact that I could do this.”

Maureen’s most difficult experience of either supervision was an impasse between her and her first supervisor, the result of which was her termination from the residency

program. “In retrospect,” she said, “it was wounding.” The supervisor explained to Maureen that he couldn’t handle supervising her: “You are too much like my wife, and I have to fight with her all the time. I don’t have the energy to fight with you as well.” In the midst of this confrontive model of supervision, Maureen had just begun to get in touch with her ability to fight, her “ability to stand up” and claim her “own authority.” “And then when I was beginning to do that,” she said, “I was put out of residency.” She then added, “typical of me I’ll find something to create something out of it.” She went back to graduate school, which she had planned to do anyway, finished the graduate program, and came back to do another two quarters at that same center. By then, she was able to start supervising. “Was that smart? I don’t know,” she said, “I don’t know if those relationships ever got repaired.” Maureen quickly affirmed, though, that the experience moved her to take care of herself and get what she wanted.

When I was ready for supervisory training, when I had a center in hand, then I could leave there. That was healing, the fact that I was allowed to do that. You know, it’s such a mixed bag, I’ll have to tell you. There’s a sense in which I would not have met the committee successfully had I not had that training. I’m convinced of that. And a lot of it was quite hurtful. Did it have to be hurtful in order for me to learn? That’s a question I’ll never know the answer to.

The second supervisory training was much more healing. Maureen remembers being extremely critical of the program at first because it was not as organized or as structured, but “I could relax and sort of do my own thing in that setting, and I think I was encouraged to claim my style and do what I needed to do.” She found, however, that over time her supervisor’s disclosures became too burdensome for her. “There was a sense in which I became [more] a support person to my supervisor than was good for me. And that I think, retrospectively, was probably a boundary violation.” She elaborated, “If respect has to do with respecting boundaries, then it was not all that respectful.” I asked

Maureen if she and her supervisor had ever talked about her feelings about this. She said that they would have, if she had brought it up and had thought that it was inappropriate.

“At that time,” however, “when you’re a student, you can’t see what’s appropriate.”

Whenever Maureen would initiate conversation, her supervisor would be there, but she did not feel that there was much dialogue because the onus was all on her to initiate.

Maureen reflected on how she got through the “really traumatic passages” in her journey. Often her strategy was constructive aggression: “I shift down, I lower my shoulder to the task, and I push.” Sometimes she coped by waiting it out and doing nothing, sometimes she regrouped, sometimes she allowed her religious community to support her. Maureen was able to reflect on the painful as well as the grace-filled parts of her experience. I was struck by her comment, “Maybe that time I sat back and waited a year and went back and got the degree, that helped me to develop or regroup. It loved something into me and I was able to move on.”

Maureen made numerous attempts to connect with her faith community while she was going through training, but she found it difficult to make connections as a single woman. She felt “sort of like an autumn leaf moving about in the wind.” She didn’t know who she was and was “struggling for an identity.” Within its structure, her own church did not provide her with a recognized identity as a professional minister. Maureen remembers wondering,

Who the hell am I? I’m not a sister, I’m not...and who’s behind me? Everybody in my group always had a church structure behind them, a church president, some kind of board of ordained ministry. I haven’t had that. Still don’t. But I didn’t have that. Now I’m not sure I’d want it. That source of support was never there. I suppose I had to learn to walk on my own two feet, huh? On some level I had to just go ahead on my own.

As she went ahead on her own, Maureen remembered a lot of midrash, the lore about what would help her make it through the committee. She recalled, “Usually if you had poor (theory) papers but could meet a committee successfully, and take it on, then you could make it.” Maureen compared today’s certification process to her own, “That’s probably one of the things people are criticizing nowadays; it takes too long to get to a committee.”

When the time came to claim her place at the table and request certification from the committee, Maureen found two things particularly helpful to her. One was demythologizing the people of power; the other was claiming her power in the peer training group. She realized that she had to certify herself in the midst of those peer group meetings and to challenge the group process in order to grow and develop. She received valuable encouragement and support from her peer group, so valuable that she continues to meet with a peer group 15 years later. In addition, Maureen had to take on her ACPE region, get next to the people in power, and demythologize them. She told a story of how she sat down next to the regional certification chair and “started poking at him.” “Who are you?” she asked. She admitted that she made this acquaintance with a rather obnoxious approach. “But,” she said, “I could not afford the luxury of being intimidated by him, threatened by him. So I had to take him on early.” When I asked her about power issues in the larger system, she groaned.

That’s huge. The organization has a heck of a time with power issues. Real mixed around gender, diversity, fairness, justice, accessibility. I think only when forced by standard and by law has the organization sort of moved in a direction of openness and accessibility and a freedom from exploitation.

When Maureen was certified, she felt triumphant. She celebrated mightily and said what ever she felt like saying at the national gathering, particularly to the first supervisor

who had terminated her. The hardest thing was going back home and not being able to celebrate with people at her work. Her male colleague had been unsuccessful in being certified in several attempts. Further, people seemed to have the attitude that “if I were a real woman, I would probably get married and settle down rather than celebrate my certification.”

Maureen has been nominated for national positions and has served in that capacity. “Before I knew my own power, I was put in situations of leadership and on committees. I have always felt like they saw something in me that I did not see in myself,” Maureen told me. “Part of me appreciates that,” she said, “but part of me dreads it as well.” “You know how I say it around here?” she asked “I’m just a farm girl...what am I doing in this job?” she replied.

“Sara”

Sara’s story reflects a very full investment in ACPE and in shaping its professional culture. When she shares her story, there is a sense of looking back and also of moving on. She finds herself now at a point where there are some other things she wants to do with her life. “CPE is not my whole life,” Sara told me, “I see some folks making it that, but there are some other things I want to do and experience.” Sara summed up the impact of her journey through certification and beyond: “CPE, the community, and the whole process has been for me a very healing one; a wonderful place in which I found myself. It kind of grew me up in some ways I had not done.”

Sara recalled that she sort of “fell into” the journey into the certification process. She never intentionally set out to become a supervisor. After graduating from seminary at age 26, she was interested in going further with CPE because she had done one unit “and

loved it.” She had not served a church, but she had been ordained in her denomination. After a year of residency, Sara was amazed at how good she felt about her situation. She told me, “I thought, ‘My God, I’ve moved out here, I’m settled, I really like this, I’m just going to do the second year.’” Those who did a second year would move naturally into the supervisory process. “I wasn’t in the supervisory program, but I moved into that. It just seemed to be the sort of thing to do,” Sara explained. “But I had never really said at any point ‘Oh, I’m really going to be a supervisor.’ But the more I did it, the more I liked it. That’s how it really happened. I loved it. I loved doing it.” By the time she finished the second year, Sara had supervised six students with her colleague. Then it was time to find a job, and Sara’s main goal was to stay in the same location. Following the retirement of a supervisor, an opportunity opened in the form of an interim position at a well-known CPE center in the same city. Sara was contacted by that supervisor and urged to take the position. He said, “All you have to do is go up before a committee.” “I know that I was afraid of it,” said Sara, “but it had not been such a legend to me.” “Okay,” she said to the supervisor, “what do I have to do?” “Well, write these papers,” he said. Sara recalled, “I’ll never forget, I was going to start working, if I could get acting (supervisor).”

The chair of the certification committee told her if she wanted to come before the committee she would have to submit the papers within a week. “So I did them, I went there, and the next thing I knew I was an acting supervisor,” Sara said. She confessed that she was naive about what certification meant, and she shared that it was a rather heady experience being an interim for a very well-known supervisor. She worked there for several months and lobbied hard for the job. When the position was offered to a fully certified supervisor, Sara was very sad. By that time, however, she had gotten to know a

few supervisors in the region, and one of them invited her to work at a mental health care center. It was a great opportunity for Sara because she could learn about therapy and counseling, and she could also work with this supervisor on her certification process.

Sara was highly motivated to stay in the same geographical location because her fiancé lived there. The marriage never materialized, though, because her life took a different turn; she fell in love with a woman. Sara described how this turn of events affected her certification process. “I think that the way my own coming out process affected the certification is that I was very frightened.” Sara commented that she did not address her coming out process in the written materials when she sought an extension for acting supervisor status. “I didn’t talk about being out at all.” She received the extension and then met a committee for full certification. Sara recalled, “I basically was going to treat it as ‘this is my own business.’”

I wasn’t going to come out in my materials. I had by that time connected with people like gay men who had been through the certification process and were certified and others who said, ‘You know, it depends. You can do what you want to,’ but it didn’t feel safe, so I didn’t. Now I will tell you that when I went up the very first time in ’83, I don’t think that had anything to do...that may have affected me in that I was so stiff in front of the committee, I went down gloriously. I really bombed out! Well the truth is, I wasn’t ready. I knew I wasn’t ready.

“I had only supervised nine students. They said to me, ‘You are not even ready, not even.’ And they were absolutely right.” It was clear to Sara why she wasn’t granted full certification. “I would never in any way fault the reason; [that] I didn’t make it had something to do with being gay and being afraid to come out.” Sara elaborated, “I was probably pretty stiff and scared and not very good at meeting a committee.” She acknowledged, “I’m sure the fact that I was afraid of somebody finding out I was lesbian,

I'm sure that's true. But I don't think I was ready to be certified...theoretically, practically."

Sara reflected on her very first experience with the committee in 1980, when she began to "have her eyes opened to the CPE process." She told me the story about the committee's response to her request for acting supervisor:

I had a committee of all men. That was when they voted in front of you. When they voted for me, they all went around the table and voted 'Yes.' The last one to vote said, 'Well, one of your issues is perfectionism, so I think we need to not let you walk out of here with a 5-0 vote; so just for that I'm going to vote No. You have a 4-1 vote.'

Sara was annoyed by that supervisor's response. At her committee appearance for full certification in 1986, she had another supervisor do what she called "fishing." Sara had decided how she wanted to handle her sexuality issue with the committee. She shared, "By that time I had been in a lot of therapy, had done a lot of work, and I did not write it in my material." She remembers making a note that she had a personal relationship, but did not talk about it. Sara was prepared to handle the issue if it came up, however. And most important, she decided she was not going to be afraid. She was clear that if anyone asked her about her sexuality, she would tell the truth. "But I was fully prepared that I would not allow it to become an issue, because back then there had already been a lot of horror stories about people wanting to focus on that." Sara described how she managed her fear.

I went inside myself, not afraid if they'd ask me. Of course I was hoping I would not have to deal with it. However, if they took it into a pathological form, then I was going to be very clear that this was my personal life; it had nothing to do with supervision. But nobody did anything. The only thing that got done was... in my opinion, there was a supervisor who did what I call fishing. He said, 'Oh, let's see now, you're 33...and you're single, right?'

Sara had no desire to get into anything with him. She looked directly at him and said, "Yes, that's correct." That's all true according to law, she thought, although Sara didn't consider herself single because she lived with somebody. Sara knew, though, that this supervisor was just playing a game (he was known to do that kind of testing), and she demonstrated her authority by being clear how she would handle it.

The time between 1983 and 1986 was fruitful for Sara's development as a supervisor. She moved to another center and had the opportunity to work with another colleague and supervisor. Within a month of moving, she had her unsuccessful attempt at full certification. After that, Sara recalled, "I really just took my time." She had to go back to a committee for an extension of her acting supervisor status, but she took the time she needed to feel ready before she went back to a committee in 1986. Sara got angry in some ways at ACPE, and she thought it was ludicrous to require people to jump through hoops the way it did. Feeling her anger, Sara recalled her internal response to that anger: "I think somewhere between my wisdom and God's wisdom, I sort of said, 'Well, this is going to build my self-confidence.'" Later, after Sara was fully certified, she used those feelings to take on the organization with her own leadership. She said, "I think there must have been something cooking inside of me when I was in the certification process that I wanted to take the organization on." Sara told me that she is a joiner and an organizer. "I'm a believer," she said, "that if you don't like the process, get in there and fix it."

One of the themes in Sara's story is fear. She wanted to face her fear head-on and become a more courageous person. The certification process, and meeting certification committees in particular, helped her to do that. The committee that did not pass her recommended that Sara get a woman supervisor as a consultant. "I had a lot of men who

were like father figures and they taught me good how to fight,” Sara explained; “They did not teach me much about how to feel strong in myself as a woman,” however. “They taught me how to get in conflict and wrestle with it.” Sara described the woman consultant she found to work with as “a powerful model of a woman for me.” Sara was determined to internalize what this woman gave her and to become a braver person. This relationship was beneficial for Sara, as were consultant’s recommendations. Sara discussed the list of things the committee had suggested that she do.

I did all the things I was supposed to do. I used therapy. I went to more therapy. Somewhere in there I did a group-therapy experience. I had some mock committees. I used my supervisory peers around me... went to that meeting every Friday, whenever it happened, and we’d talk, talk, talk, talk. I also did some bodywork in therapy.

Sara was eager to tell me about the mantra she developed out of challenging herself in the physical arena. “You had to make your body do what it needed to do so you wouldn’t hurt yourself, and you had to stay present to yourself.” She commented, “As we all know, when you get scared, you don’t stay present to yourself.” Sara made herself do the activity over and over again, first admitting to herself that she was scared, then making herself do it anyway. Sara disclosed her approach to the committee. She told me, “Even though you’re scared doesn’t mean you can’t do the work.” She wanted me to understand how significant it was for her to conquer her fear. “I’d grown up in a family of a lot of violence and alcohol, and fear used to immobilize me. So when you asked what my impasses were, I realized they were that.” Sara continued by telling me about a breakthrough that helped her to find the necessary support she needed to grow and change on a personal level.

Then I had a supervisor friend colleague who on the extension meeting finally looked at me because I was talking about how I had sent all of my students to

ACoA groups that unit, and he said, 'Well, when are you going to go?' And I know what came out of my mouth was just a Godsend. I looked right at him and said, 'Well, I'm a supervisor, I don't need to go.' As soon as I said it, we all just...it was like a moment of light. My denial broke because I realized how ludicrous I sounded. That was for me a high point because then I started going to ACoA groups and then I started doing a lot of work and turned a corner.

Sara felt that all of her supervisors modeled self-respect for her, even when she was angry with them. She did not think they were particularly curious about her motivation. That, she thought, was a gender difference. They wanted to debate with her and challenge her and have her tell them why she was doing what she was doing. All three male supervisors, she felt, maintained appropriate professional boundaries. They were empowering, Sara told me, "because they assumed I could do things." "They didn't baby me or nurture me." Sara confided, "They were all very healing to me in all kinds of ways." She elaborated:

I think that had to do with my journey because I had such a wounded father/daughter relationship that I found men very helpful to me. There was a great deal of healing because they were all very kind men; even if externally they looked tough, they all had hearts of a pastor. I would say that all of them were very encouraging. One way they were encouraging of dialogue is they taught me to fight with them. I had never been able to do that. If someone pissed me off, I had usually found ways to get out passive-aggressively, and they wouldn't let me do that.

As much as she appreciated the supervision she received, Sara found the certification structures a bit burdensome. She conceded that she thought there were ways that somebody could be better mentored through the process. Sara said, "I did experience a little of what I would call hazing. We're going to make it just as hard...I remember thinking some of that was unnecessary." Sara has found organizational leadership at the top to be "not as open as it ought to be." In her view, some exploitation was allowed at the regional level, particularly in the 1980s. "I went head to head," she stated, "over

things like what jokes people tell in public at banquets.” Sara was positive about the learning she gained in doing that. “I think the structures are there for people,” she said. “I think what we have not done well in ACPE is invite people when they come in and they’re new. We don’t help them get on board.”

Sara continued to reflect on ACPE as a hospitable environment. She told me that when she was in the certification process she did not perceive it as a safe place to be a lesbian. “I think that has changed. I like to think I’ve helped that change.” She remembered that there were “clearly a lot of men there threatened by women.” Sara remembered,

There were a lot of ways in which I feel like I kept my mouth shut in some moments when I really wanted to speak up because the men had the power. I was aware of some of that at the time. Being aware of it, I tried real hard to keep my voice out there when I could and keep my energy focused on getting certified so that I could help the organization.

Sara reflected on her spirituality: “I don’t think I had much of a relationship with God during the certification process.” She tried to nurture spirituality in her groups, but she confessed that she didn’t think she knew much about spirituality then. Only after the certification process, when her personal relationship began to deteriorate, did she begin to develop her own community of faith and to value it in her life. “It’s much different for me today,” she explained. “I think I let CPE become my church for a while.”

CHAPTER 5

1990s

Women in the 90s to the Present

The next stories are of women who finished their certification process in the 90s, have withdrawn from the process, or are still in the process.

“Lynn”

Lynn was a 26-year-old seminarian when she took her first unit of CPE in 1977, and the experience was transforming experience for her. “It was the first time I was invited to look at my own story and apply it to my ministry,” she explained. “It was wonderful care for me.” She experienced her supervisor as a “safe and honorable man,” which was important to her because she had not had much of that in her life. In the several years that followed that first unit of CPE, Lynn was coming out to herself as a lesbian. She had been married in seminary to a man, and she was very interested in going further with CPE. Lynn knew, however, that CPE would lead her to look at her personal life and its relevance to her ministry. That was terrifying for her. “And at that time and place in my life, and in our culture,” Lynn recalled, “that did not seem to be a real possibility to integrate being a lesbian and being a minister.” Instead, Lynn served a church for two years, and during that time her marriage fell apart. She was divorced and involved with a woman when she sought vocational guidance at a center that her denomination sponsored for clergy in transition.

Lynn was open with the counselor about her attempts to find vocational direction for her ministry. She received a Freudian message, however; here is how Lynn described what she heard:

‘You’re immature in your development and you need to grow up. You can’t do this.’ ‘You can’t be a lesbian and be a minister, so you’ve got to choose.’ So I

didn't trust that CPE would give me any message other than that. So it took me nine years to go back for a second unit of CPE.

Lynn took a job as a nursing home chaplain, did a year of internship at a developmental center with developmentally disabled and physically handicapped people in a state institution, and moved into the nursing home chaplaincy. She loved institutional ministry and had always been drawn to clinical settings and health care. In fact, Lynn had previously looked into nursing or physical therapy, having been interested for a long time in those professions. Her goal was to complete four units of CPE and become endorsed by her denomination as an institutional chaplain.

When Lynn did return to CPE, she found just the opposite of what she had expected. Her supervisor was "another really good guy that I trusted and felt open with and able to do some integrative work that I wasn't able to do anywhere else, in terms of sexuality and vocation." Lynn appreciated the opportunities for growth in what she called "pre-supervisory training." Her supervisor encouraged her to go for a fourth unit with a female supervisor and be a course assistant. She could read verbatims and think about the curriculum a little bit. Lynn received explicit affirmation from the woman supervisor about her work with students. She noted on one of Lynn's reflection papers that she could see Lynn guiding her students through difficult learning experiences in the medical setting. That was enough for Lynn to begin immediately exploring possibilities for supervisory training, but nothing was open and the timing wasn't right. She went back to her job as a nursing home chaplain feeling confirmed in a "growing dream of being a supervisor."

Lynn had some self-doubt, however. She had contemplated the idea of becoming a supervisor before her fourth unit of CPE. She told me that when she asked her first

supervisor whether he thought she had the skills to be a supervisor, he told her he didn't know. She remembers being taken aback and thinking, "Well I don't know either." Lynn was drawn to CPE supervision but she had placed supervisors on an "immense pedestal," and the dream seemed unattainable. Lynn recalls her feelings about becoming a supervisor:

They [supervisors] were different than you and me. They were better than, they were smarter than, they were more insightful than anybody in the world. I kept thinking, 'That would be so cool!' 'Oh, I couldn't do that. I'm not that smart, I'm not that insightful, I'm not that integrated.' I was idealizing out the wazoo.

Lynn also recalled that, though the supervision she had was solid and caring and just what she needed, it was therapeutic in intent. Her supervisor was not very skill-based, she believed, and so she may have had difficulty getting the feedback about her skills that she needed in order to develop her self-confidence in that area.

Nevertheless, Lynn was able to hold onto her dream. She thought CPE supervision was a wonderful thing. It involved a combination of things she liked: teaching, institutional ministry, and getting involved in people and their stories. "So at some level it was a good fit," she told me. Lynn talked about her inner feelings of self-doubt:

All the components were things in which I had some skill and some interest. But I didn't trust that I had enough. So I went into this process thinking I'm probably not going to get through it. I'm probably going to get bounced out somewhere along the way – either because I'm not smart enough or because of my sexuality, or both.

I asked Lynn about why she continued to pursue this path in spite thinking that she would not succeed. She enjoyed telling me this story:

At the nursing home I helped out the social workers by taking social histories of new residents, and I kept listening to the stories of older women – median age maybe 86 – and they'd tell me these stories. 'Well, I always thought I wanted to be a _____, (fill in the blank), but I never did it.' And I thought – I was smart enough to know at that point in my early 30's that my 80's were a long time

away. But it [time] is going faster and faster, and what if I never go for my dream? So that was instrumental. And THEN a woman named _____, I'll love her soul forever, I cherish this woman to this day and she's long dead – she marched into my office one day and said, 'Lynn, I love you, you know I love you. You do funerals the best of anyone I know, and I would love for you to preach at my funeral. But you have more skills than this, and I think God wants you to move on to something bigger and better.' And I said, 'Ooh, like the voice of God speaking to me through this wonderful older lady.' I thought, Okay. Maybe I should. Maybe I should go for it. What am I going to lose if I do go for it? I know I could lose a whole lot. But I'll never know if I could have done this or not.

Lynn recalled what a gift that experience was for her.

When Lynn officially began supervisory training in 1988, she did not have a peer group. There were a few others in the state who were doing supervisory training, but her supervisors chose to discourage contact because “they didn't think the other people were making progress or were really going to get through” and didn't want to “contaminate” Lynn's progress. This was difficult because Lynn also struggled with her supervisors around her learning style, and she could have used the peer support and input on theory papers. She has learned in retrospect that she tends to look toward the past for her learning. “I don't intuitively leap forward, and I feel more comfortable with models than with creating something out of the air.” This, coupled with her tendency to look for guidance from people she perceives in authority, was a difference in learning style and personality that created tension in the relationships with her two supervisors. Lynn's growing understanding of learning styles has been meaningful and helpful because she had felt “in some way judged in this process that I wasn't learning right.” “The way that got translated with two Intuitive-Feeling type supervisors was dependent, uncreative, pedestrian, literal, non-imaginative,” Lynn said. Dependence was a big theme for Lynn, and it was judged negatively. “Now that didn't always get in the way, but on occasion I experienced people being impatient with me. ‘Well, why don't you just do it?’” Having a

peer group “would have helped “immeasurably”; instead, she felt somewhat isolated.

“That was the hard part of this with both of my supervisors,” she explained. Lynn conceded, however, that her experience was in some ways empowering: “Maybe because I got through and did come up with theory papers that passed, and I did become a good supervisor. But it was a not fun process.”

Lynn discussed with me how the process of supervisory education replicated the dynamics and struggles in her family of origin. Lynn commented that it was like living in her family, “I experienced the certification process as having rules, but there was not a clear way to meet these rules and expectations. It was ve-ery subjective. And I always felt like I didn’t quite fit.” Specifically, Lynn felt that she had a different personality than what was desired. Being lesbian and having ADD were major contributors to this feeling. Lynn discovered later that she had ADD and exclaimed that she would have loved the help of medicine during her college years and the certification process. Looking back, she realized that everything took her enormous amounts of time.

Lynn described how she learned to claim her own supervisory style despite receiving supervision that did not seem to fit her very well as a person and that was characterized by difficult and complicated dynamics. In retrospect, Lynn believes there was considerable transference and countertransference with her female supervisor, including competition and “can I measure up issues.” These dynamics echoed her family dysfunction, and. Lynn articulated some of the stickier dynamics:

The push toward enmeshment, and the higher standards, and the anger and all that kind of stuff gets generated. So I think she needed me to do well, but she needed to do better. And I needed to please her.

At one point Lynn really felt stuck and confided that she was a hair's breadth away from being booted out of supervisory education. She worked with the male supervisor for a time and submitted her theory papers. When the papers did not pass, the female supervisor became reinvested in Lynn's process; under her guidance, Lynn rewrote her papers and they passed.

What was hard for Lynn at the time was not having a language or framework to help her understand how she did not fit. "Both of these supervisors were trained more in the 'old school' than I was," Lynn said. "By definition in the 'old school' it was always the student's problem. I don't think that's true anymore. But I was trained to be the problem and to be more aggressive." Lynn realized that the style of supervision she received did not work well for her own supervision of students, and she thinks that the different styles gave her trouble in her certification appearance for full supervisor. She felt as though she was being molded into someone else's image of what a supervisor ought to be. "So I had to reinvent and reclaim a supervisory style that really worked for me," Lynn concluded. Lynn found that she was able to claim her own style by relocating geographically and changing cultures from the aggressive "in-your-face" approach to one that was more compatible with her personality.

When I asked Lynn for a metaphor that would describe her experience, she mentioned a roller coaster. As she was going through certification, there would be times when she felt it was possible and that she might survive, but "it felt more like a marathon, like endurance, just trying to keep going," added. "In retrospect," Lynn said, "I invested too much, gave up too much to do this." She elaborated:

I had moved from home, moved from the place I had lived for thirteen years, gone into this new place. I dragged this new partner with me who was working a job

that she couldn't stand. We moved...we didn't know anybody. I mean, what was I going to do if I didn't get through it? I know in my life how to endure, and I think I just tried to find a way to endure and get through it. There were good days, but I don't look back on it as having much of that, although I know there were. I think it was more...that I just wasn't willing to give up.

When I inquired about highpoints, Lynn mentioned that at the time it was hard for her to value her success because she was so good at devaluing it. She cited a quote from W.C. Fields: "I wouldn't join a group that would have me." We both chuckled and reflected on the humor and the sadness in that comment. Today, however, Lynn can celebrate her success and claims that she is much better at saying, "This is good."

Another change in Lynn's life is with her faith community and her relationship with God. The church where Lynn and her partner are both members has become an increasingly nurturing place. Within this community, Lynn began to image God as a more relational, caring, supportive, and nurturing presence in her life, which was a significant change from the distance from God that Lynn had felt before. "I had a God-image of a distant, kind of neutral-to-cold figure who was just kind of going to wait and see what I did. I kind of had to earn a place."

Lynn and her partner also celebrated their union ceremony at their church, an experience that was an "immensely healing experience" for Lynn. She recalls having put it off for "a whole three years" because she was afraid of being kicked out of her denomination (losing her ordination and livelihood) and kicked out of CPE (losing her dream and vocation). "I didn't trust at all that I was going to be certified before somebody kicked me out of something," she confided. Nevertheless, Lynn and her partner dared to approach the church about whether a marriage ceremony would be possible. "I think part of the internalized homophobia is assuming that if you ever ask the

question, you are going to bring disaster,” Lynn reflected. Although Lynn was strongly cautioned by her supervisor that she could “blow everything,” as a person of faith she felt deeply about celebrating her commitment with the blessing of the church. Lynn recalled that the minister was true to form in her denomination and responded, ‘Well, I don’t ask the deacons if I can do a wedding, so why would I ask the deacons if I could do a union?’ Even though it felt a bit “on the sly,” and even though she was not sure that the whole church would bless their union, Lynn and her partner received a gift of grace. “There was an immense blessing in the community gathered – both from the church and from our lives and families. So in some way, that helped me trust that God was blessing us.” When Lynn and her partner moved to their current location, they found another church that is very open and loving; they were able to join together and to be integrated from the beginning. Lynn marveled at the transition – from hardly being able to look at her partner in public to putting their wedding anniversary in the church newsletter. The shift happened while she was in supervisory training.

Lynn found wider support on the regional level of ACPE and has experienced ACPE as structurally more proactive than other organizations. She has felt cared about, seen, and known. Lynn recalled that she felt as though people were “going, ‘Rah! Rah! We want you to succeed.’ And that was really important to me.” Gay/lesbian hospitality was also important. Lynn remembered being at an ACPE meeting and repeatedly walking up and down the hall, trying to decide whether she should go in. She finally said to herself, “If it is not okay to be there, I should probably find out before I cast my lot with this organization. So I went in, and the rest is history.” That there was a place for gay and lesbian people made all the difference: “not hiding or pretending they were something

else.” Lynn built on these strong positive feelings toward ACPE and assumed national leadership roles after her certification in 1995. Lynn reflected that the weird, confounding responses around sexuality that she received from certification committee members in the late 1980’s had to do with their lack of experience with an openly gay person. Lynn was not sure how to respond, either; she reasoned that they were all trying to figure it out together. Lynn did not think, however, that her sexual orientation was a “hugely noisy factor” during her certification: “I was ‘out’ throughout my papers and throughout my process. I think that was helpful.” Lynn is aware, though, that the safety she feels in ACPE and in her local church, she still does not feel in her denomination.

Lynn’s perspective on the abuse of power in ACPE was enlightening. She told me,

I think I’ve experienced ACPE as the most sensitive to power issues than any organization I’ve been in. Certainly much more than the church, where there’s a horrendous, in my opinion, abuse of power with no verbal recognition of it. I think the professional ethics and the structures that we have are imperfect, yes; not always applied well, yes. But they are there, and that is important; they provide a safety net for those of us in minority positions.

Lynn discussed the huge power imbalances between supervisors and students and between supervisors and supervisors-in-training. To address the imbalance, Lynn believes that clear structures and accountability are absolutely necessary: “Part of my theological anthropology is we really do tend to abuse each other when we have unfettered freedom.” “I’ve seen supervisors booted out for crossing boundaries, she explained. “Well that is very relieving to me because I have personal abuse history. And I tell you,” she stressed, “there are a lot of places in this world where abusers go free and the victim gets blamed.”

Lynn recalled a time when she decided to file a grievance after a disastrous appearance before the certification committee. This step was a very important element in

her growth. “You know, anybody who has been abused has a really hard time saying, ‘No, this is wrong,’” Lynn said. Lynn appreciated the fact that the organization took her seriously and did not punish her. In fact, Lynn has always been impressed that in her experience of CPE “there are people who are fair and caring and generous and will actually do their jobs.” She doesn’t always experience other people as willing to do likewise.

“Elaine”

In the last year of seminary, Elaine’s professor of pastoral counseling said to her, “You need to take CPE.” Elaine had never heard of CPE before, but the professor seemed convinced of its importance for her, and she invited him to tell her more about it. Soon she found herself in an extended unit of CPE in a prominent center, and Elaine began to notice some good changes occurring in her life. When a fellow graduate mentioned to her that the center was accepting applications for a full year of CPE, Elaine prayerfully considered it and decided to apply. The decision was not easy because she had to give up a well-paying job and step out on faith. Elaine reflected, “That brought a lot of spiritual, professional, and positive personal changes in my life. Learned so much about me and my growing edges...got acquainted with therapy, summer of ’89...my CPE supervisor.” Her supervisor, a woman of color, was a positive role model for Elaine. Recalling a conversation they had at the end of that first year, Elaine told me that her supervisor asked her where she saw herself going. Elaine responded, “‘Being a supervisor like yourself.’ She laughed and said, ‘Well, you know it doesn’t just happen like that. They have to select you.’” Elaine mused at the irony outcome: “...it was a funny thing, she ended up dropping out of the process, and here I am fully certified.”

“It’s just funny how God just made stuff happen,” Elaine observed. As the second woman of color to be accepted into the supervisory training program at that hospital, Elaine found the journey to be tedious journey. Other persons of color had told Elaine about their experiences of prejudice when they had applied not been accepted, and they suggested that Elaine would not be accepted either. Elaine decided to apply, anyway. She was already ordained in her denomination, was active in the church’s ministry, and had been chosen among some stiff competition in her peer group. Elaine nevertheless encountered battles she fought and remembers saying to herself, “Boy, when I get fully certified I’m certainly not going to be treating students like this.” Elaine characterized some of her experiences with supervisors as not-so-good and even abusive. She learned how she did not want to develop as a supervisor.

Elaine was married in December of 1989, during the training process. She told stories that illustrated the supportiveness of her minister husband, who had already had a unit of CPE. She attributes much of her success in the process to his support.

He was getting me up early in the morning to motivate me to write theory papers, to get work done with students’ final evaluations. He would hang out at Kinko’s with me to see that I got stuff lined up for books, he would read over stuff for me. Had good editors in his church that would help edit papers before mailing them in.

Besides the good personal support, Elaine felt she had a good mentor in her training supervisor, also a woman of color, who continues to be a source of support for Elaine to this day.

Becoming a CPE Supervisor appealed to Elaine because it seemed equivalent to pastoring a church. Elaine had struggled with her pastoral identity and had decided that it would be difficult to become a parish pastor in her denomination. Some women occupied

such positions, but very few of them were women of color. Elaine thought, “Hey, this is a place where I can be me, where I can help others.” “You’ve got your own little 5 to 7 students,” she realized. “You’ve got your own collegial group going for conferences. That’s the equivalency of going to church conventions.” Elaine felt that the vocational path fit her: “It just felt good. It felt like the right place.” She prayed about it and talked with her supervisors about what it took for them to be certified, and she gave the process a chance. When her first candidacy appearance was unsuccessful, Elaine did not give up. She told me that she was empowered to look at herself and to move on. She figured out as she went along in the certification process that the job of a supervisor-in-training was quite unique and desirable.

What other job can you do where you can constantly take a look at your growing edges and folks love you at the same time; and you can be with your own stuff and learn from it and move on and not feel shame or whatever.

Elaine was drawn to this ministry because it was a positive and empowering ministry for her, a ministry of acceptance. “That’s who I am; that’s my life,” Elaine affirmed. She did look at other denominational “doors” and consulted with her female colleagues about what looked good. In CPE, however, Elaine had her mentor who was a woman of color, and Elaine kept saying to her, “You need more women of color in this thing.”

Going to her first ACPE Racial, Ethnic and Multicultural (REM) Conference in 1990 was both impressive and empowering. Elaine said, “Wow, here’s somebody who looks like me who is in this process.” She recalled being excited seeing a number of folks and realizing that there was space for her. Elaine recalled hearing the first American woman of color to be certified tell her story. Hearing the woman’s struggle really impressed Elaine and motivated her to hang in there. She went away with new resolve: “I said,

‘Well, more of us are needed in this field of ministry. So let me hang in there and go for it.’”

Elaine had five supervisors, four men and two women, whom she called “some great supervisors” and gives “credit to them.” She found her supervisors who were persons of color to be more healing for her and encouraging of dialogue; the Euro-Americans were more wounding, only some encouraging of dialogue. One Euro-American really paid attention to her story as she approached the development of her theory papers; he empowered her to look at theorists who fit her story and style.

In discussing the issue of respect in her supervisory relationships, Elaine described one of the male supervisors as disrespectful when he did not keep time or show up for appointments. Elaine illustrated with this story:

I felt he respected me but then there was this crazy stuff like having to look for supervisory time. He just had too much on his plate. I remember one day... I made fun of it but it worked for me... I remember walking with him to one of his meetings that was across the campus. He was on his way to an administrative meeting. I remember walking with him, just talking out my supervisory stuff. And people said, ‘I’m not going to do that with him.’ Other supervisors in training would talk about the kind of supervisor he was, too, that you couldn’t find him, he didn’t keep appointments. And I said, “Well, he keeps them with me because I just make ‘em happen. And they said, ‘You mean you got something out of that?’ I said, ‘Yea, I got more out of that than I did in his office.’ But you know you shouldn’t have to do that kind of crazy stuff unless the student or supervisor has a relationship to do that.

With the female supervisor, Elaine had some minor tension and conflict that she did not quite understand. Elaine was aware that this supervisor had not had a good supervisory relationship with the other woman of color. Elaine thought that some of the residue from that relationship was spilling onto her because there was some “confrontive stuff going on.” She tried, however, to keep herself from bringing her own projections into the supervisory relationship. All supervisors modeled self-respect, Elaine thought.

She did have a problem with one of the male supervisors when he sided with a student Elaine was supervising. She described the situation:

He hadn't even heard my spiel on what had happened with me, and the student. Like he was trying to protect the student rather than to protect me as being on his staff, as supervisor-in-training. I talked to him about that, that I didn't like that at all.

Elaine felt that the female woman of color supervisor was the main person she could go to if something was happening in the supervisory group or if she felt she was not being heard. A particular encounter with this supervisor was enlightening.

And then she would say, 'This is just a hard place.' She owned some of her own struggles. And I saw how some days it appeared that she wasn't being heard or embraced as a staff member. At that time she was an associate supervisor. And I didn't see her being strongly embraced and empowered. So its like 'Oh this is what's going on here.' At times it felt like they didn't want you to grow up and be a supervisory candidate.

Elaine told me that she always found ways to raise her concerns. Sometimes, she recalled, those were battles – “doing what they would tell you to do” and taking care of herself at the same time. “I just found creative ways to start bonding with staff members who would find me some space to type papers for candidacy or whatever,” she explained. “You just had to find ways around their craziness. It was like these people would keep you in bondage. If you keep doing this, you'll never get certified.” Elaine recognized that a different attitude could help her take care of herself; she couldn't change their system, but she could express herself. “So I did find space to have a voice and voice my opinions. There was freedom in being creative,” she concluded.

Claiming her own authority and exercising her voice started Elaine on a path of “going against the grain” of authority that was in place in her training program and among staff chaplains. When Elaine went against the grain and created something

recognized by others in the hospital or city, she got back the attitude “Who does she think she is?” Elaine stressed, however, that “that’s where I learned the importance of owning my own voice...and they had taught me how to name what’s going on in me, so I just did it.”

Elaine did not experience any traumatic events or real abuse in the certification process that brought her to a standstill. She struggled at times, nevertheless, with people saying things like, “persons of color just can’t make it through the process.” She described the high points of her training time as “just being myself,” directing the choir at special public events at the hospital, and being invited to participate in a lot of programs. The downside of these experiences was a measure of competition and rivalry with her peers.

Elaine explained to me that her spiritual life has always been a tremendous resource for her in life, during supervisory training, and in her supervision of students.

I have always been a prayerful woman, have turned to God to help me with my supervisors, to help me be able to look at my students and hear their stories...put that in the relationship of standing on holy ground during the first day of working with the students. Even my process of working with supervisors I would try to see the good in them despite what I’ve heard from previous peers and previous relationships with them. I would go in with the sense that this was a good person and this is a good thing happening and would try to keep it in the right perspective.

Being centered in prayer, daily prayer, and having a listening ear are among Elaine’s spiritual disciplines. Her theology and supervisory practice promote the significance of prayer and spirituality. Elaine says that she has always been a praying person, her morning devotion comes before doing anything else.

Just turn to God during the supervisory moment. In my office I keep some spiritually centering music going all the time, and the students have gotten to the point where they appreciate that music...I keep it going even when I travel

because they can sort of hear it coming through the door. And its just nice...and it keeps me spiritually centered, Judy. It just brings forth empowering moments in the supervisory relationship.

Elaine has played that music for the last three years, and she always kept a tape recorder in her office during the certification process “just for having a relationship with God in my own space.” For eight years, Elaine has gone on a yearly retreat to a beautiful wilderness area where she can “center down and pray” and be in the “stillness of God.” She makes a practice of giving to God everything that has happened over the year and of inviting God into her life for the coming year. “I pray for my students every morning before I leave this house, even on the weekends, just to see them doing well,” she confided. “If there’s conflict going on, just see them working through that, and seeing me work through stuff for their good. So I keep God at the center of this process.” Elaine concluded, “I attribute everything to God.” In her ever developing prayer life, Elaine seeks help in seeing the good in every situation and then finding the energy to move on. Church has always been important in Elaine’s life, and she is active in a community church.

Elaine commented on battles that she has had to fight within her institution and within ACPE. When these organizations are unresponsive, she asks herself why she is using so much energy. Then she also reminds herself that some things are worth fighting for and others are not. She commented,

You can’t kill yourself fighting some battles that you know you need to win, but you can’t win ‘em because you’re just fighting. Nothing is happening. So its, Okay, let me see what I can do with this energy that’s going to be good for me. And that’s what I decided to do.

Elaine appreciated a colleague who wrote an article that was critical of the “gate-keeping” he has observed in the certification process. She wonders whether some regions

truly are open to diversity. She hears much talk about sensitivity and openness to diversity, but outside the REM network and conference, she does not see it. Turning to God in prayer, Elaine said, "Okay God, something is going to happen to us. Something is finally getting ready to break through." She observed, "I do think we have some interesting gate-keeping going on in the [certification] process."

Elaine told a story about insensitivity to her culture when she was going through the certification process.

You know, all the women of color who are certified, it's the same thing – that we over-function, we do too much. Well if you know anything about women of color and culture, all of us who are successful... white folks may say we over-function and do too much, but that's who we are. My great, great grandmother was over-functioning because she was taking care of the great great grandchildren and a whole bunch of stuff. Taking care of the church, taking care of the husband. That's who we are. So how do you embrace my culture and still open up the door for me to make it in this process without saying I can't pass the committee because I'm over-functioning? And that's some of my anger at not passing the candidacy committee, because the big piece was Elaine over-functions. And I have been over-functioning ever since. That's who I am.

For Elaine, that kind of attitude gets played out in organizational structures and needs to be scrutinized and changed because it is unfair. She illustrated with examples of women of color who "over-function" and are "a light in this country." If you left it to CPE, she implied, they wouldn't have a chance to be that "light" because judgments about their over-functioning would deny them the opportunity to move on. Elaine is a person who "makes things happen," and she sees that positive trait in the successful women of color. "In the certification process," Elaine told me, "my culture was not embraced fully as to who I was and what I brought to the table." She thought the committee was "basing her stuff on previous women of color's stuff." Elaine also thought that candidates should meet with readers about their theory papers because, in talking,

they could demonstrate to readers more than can fit in five pages. Further, Elaine observed that certification committee members can at times lose sight of the guidelines when making their judgments about whether to pass someone. In Elaine's view, committees tend to stress points that are not really in the standards or guidelines. Elaine is angry that unfair practices that she experienced in the process continue to be replicated: "I don't feel when I was in the process that supervisors did enough of their homework to meet people where the hell they are. You see what I'm saying? I'm tired of that." Elaine emphasized that supervisors on certification committees need to look beyond their own experiences of coming through the process and to become more honest.

We need to start honestly looking into students' situations. Looking into what's going on with this person right now? And can I hear that? 'Cause that's darn good supervising from my perspective. I'm doing it all my life anyway with my students.

"So I'm thinking," Elaine said, "the process has got to change" because there is "too much foolishness going on." Elaine concluded, "I think if we don't change we're going to lose some good people who have better things to do" – especially people of color, Jewish people, and black and white women who know they are better than the process. As far as the organization goes, the REM conference has helped Elaine move toward wholeness, a place where she "certainly discovered her voice and got rejuvenated." REM is more than an annual conference for Elaine; it has been a place of encouragement where she could build sustaining relationships of help to her in life and work. Elaine could reach out to others at REM and really feel connected.

"A lot of light bulbs just came on for me at REM," Elaine remarked. "All the people of color stories, hearing their pain, and telling them 'Yea, I'm going through that, too, but

you've got to hang in there.'" Elaine remembers talking with people regarding their concerns about racial prejudice.

She may not like you because you are a person of color, but you know, you name that stuff, and then you still hang in there. I tell people sometimes I know we've just got to take that until we can do better. Do I want to be telling people that? Uh-uh. No. If somebody's mistreating you because you are a person of color, no, you don't have to do that until you can do better. There ought to be a forum in this organization where you can go the next moment with that garbage when that happens. You hear what I'm saying? Nobody should be out here in isolation by themselves taking NOTHING off of nobody in ACPE.

Elaine credits the CPE culture with helping her gain the ability to use her anger and prophetic voice to confront unethical practices and work toward constructive change. Her experience in ACPE has given her the voice to raise concerns in her local church, where tradition holds that "the pastor makes the last word." "You are not supposed to confront the pastor when he or she is saying something wrong," Elaine told me "and I know this is the empowerment of the CPE process that says, 'Elaine, this doesn't feel good, so you're going to say something or do something.'" Elaine's personal power and her ability to empower others by using her voice that "goes against the grain" struck me as she affirmed at the end of our interview that "I use my voice. And that has come from the CPE culture...it has shaped me."

"Connie"

Connie was happy as the Director of Pastoral Care in a community hospital. After graduating from seminary in the 1970s, she went into the parish ministry for a number of years. She strongly valued the unit of CPE she had taken while in seminary, and she was interested in going further with CPE but said she went into the parish because "you had to do that." "You couldn't go straight through back when I was in CPE in the '70s," she

recalled. Connie eventually left the parish to specialize in ministry that she loved, offering pastoral care as a hospital chaplain.

After her hospital was incorporated into a large health care system, Connie was approached by administrators and strongly encouraged to become a CPE Supervisor. The idea appealed to Connie because she had always had an interest in CPE supervision but had never had the opportunity to pursue it. She enjoyed teaching and working with people within the CPE model. Thinking that she could discontinue the process if she was unhappy for whatever reason, Connie began certification, but she really thought that supervision would be another interesting medium for doing what she loved.

I was attracted to being able to teach and prepare other people to proceed in the vocation that I found to be very dear, which is chaplaincy. Also, I was very committed to the idea that people in seminary really needed to take a unit of CPE. I had been in a parish quite a few years and I saw a real difference between clergy who had experience in some CPE and clergy who hadn't. So that was part of my commitment – I wanted to offer that opportunity to other people.

Connie enjoyed the peer group experience, finding it both stimulating and supportive.

She particularly appreciated one colleague, a supervisory candidate with whom she had worked on many occasions. The work for certification was time-consuming and tiring because it was added onto Connie's regular work responsibilities. "I was either at the computer at home or working. So it did impinge on my social life and my family life a great deal," she recalled.

Imminent budget cuts made the hospital climate tense as well. Connie described the atmosphere that surrounded her entry into the certification process.

In my case you have to superimpose that there were hospitals going through a great many changes at that point. So I dealt on two levels. I dealt on the level of the hospital being taken over – and they said nothing would change and everything changed. People were being fired. I was going through all that while I was also going through the CPE process.

The dynamics of Connie's relationship with her supervisor were also enormously affected by the broader administrative context. The complexity of her situation rendered many things difficult and confusing. Connie shared that she struggled greatly with the empowering/nonempowering dimension of the supervisory relationship. Her supervisor did not seem motivated to put much work into his own supervising. Connie remarked, "The deeper I got into it [supervision], the more responsibility he gave me and was not happy about having to take it himself." She clarified the paradox of this struggle: "So in one way he was very empowering because he handed it over to me. In another way he wasn't very empowering because he handed it over to me." Finding time to meet with her supervisor was a problem because of his schedule and the hospital situation.

Connie gives her supervisor a great deal of credit for grappling with what she called the "old school of CPE" and the "new school of CPE." "He was definitely one of the 'good old boys,' icons, knew the founders and all this. So he really tried to be more modern, more educating, but he really struggled with that a great deal." That struggle was difficult for Connie because at times he was "very supportive and healing," but at other times, "the old boy network would come out in him." As an example of her point, Connie told of a woman she and her supervisor knew who had endured an abusive CPE experience, some of which involved sexual exploitation.

There would be times when he would almost blame her. Then we would tell him how ridiculous that was. And he would say, 'Oh, yes, yes,' and try to get back on track...but I found that kind of thing to be wounding. He would flip back and forth, back and forth. So it was very hard to tie him down to anything. Part of that was trying to be "with" the newer kind of CPE. I always felt his heart was in the right place and he wanted things to go well, but he wasn't sure about this new kind of thing, and he would get into the old boy way of doing things. That was fairly wounding.

Despite this, Connie learned much from his analysis of her supervision but not always what would have been most helpful. “What I came to believe as I watched other supervisors,” she said, “is that those who were clearly a part of the old school had many of the same paradoxes, opposites going on with them. They were trying to adjust to a new way, too.” Connie was also bothered by the feeling that she wasn’t sure that her supervisor believed that she could successfully get through the certification process, even though her peers and other supervisors did: “I’m not sure I ever felt that HE believed that I could get through the process.”

Connie’s experience with her second supervisor, a female, was a “particularly wounding” situation: “When I tried to deal with the things I had been dealing with the other supervisor, there was no help, there was only blame.” Connie expressed respect for both of her supervisors for the work they had done in other arenas, but she had a lot of difficulty getting the kind of supervision she needed. For example, Connie felt overwhelmed by her work situation and the first supervisor’s demands. She believed that the second supervisor could provide specific help to Connie in sorting through the issues arising from her overwhelming professional situation; instead, when Connie sought some structure and guidance in dealing with complexities that were beyond her control, the second supervisor “had a very short fuse with that.” She and Connie also “buted heads” over approaches to students. Connie shared other examples of conflict and tension in this supervisory relationship and concluded, “I always felt like she was one of those plants that would eat you.” Connie recalled,

She was, however, very self-respectful. She did model taking care of her family and herself and her job. That was refreshing because I hadn’t experienced that with the other person. I saw her give other people respect. I didn’t feel particularly respected by her. I never could really figure that out.

Before this woman not her primary supervisor, Connie had had a much more positive experience with her and had valued her input. She appreciated how active this supervisor was in peer group, and she had good memories of the leadership she provided around theory development:

Two people were working to go for associate supervisor. And I was beginning to work on my papers or my candidacy. So we would meet every other week halfway between our places. At that point I experienced her as really helpful. She worked hard with the papers; she had some really good insights; she was really helpful to all three of us. We enjoyed those times together and it wasn't that she wasn't challenging and confrontive; she certainly was.

Despite struggles with supervisors and tension at the hospital, Connie would most likely have stayed with the certification process had her employment not been directly threatened. With budget cutbacks, Connie's financial situation was precarious and no longer tolerable. She realized that she had to find a better paying position.

Looking back on her overall experience in the certification process, Connie remembered much that was positive. The frustration with her first supervisor remained, however: "Everybody always said, 'Oh, well, he's always like that.' I guess everybody found him like that. So if I wanted to work with him, I had to put up with that." Working with students was Connie's greatest reward. As she said, "I enjoyed working with the students. I felt I had something to give them. So I struggled with the extra heavy load because I enjoyed doing that." Connie gave examples of high points she had experienced with particular students. I was impressed that these vignettes depicted extremely challenging situations in which Connie had had to stand alone, relying on her own sense of ethics and supervisory authority to address tricky and complicated administrative/supervisory dilemmas. As Connie described the kinds of educational

programs she had put in place for students, she displayed her ability as an able pastoral educator and student advocate.

Peer groups were another high point for Connie. “I looked forward to going to the peer group and the experiences we had there,” she said; “The discussions, going over papers, and those kind of thing were fascinating.” She also appreciated times of intimate sharing with her peers and received significant support with the group and with a close female colleague. Yet Connie also paid a big price. She told me, “I found very little chance to be with patients. That was a real frustration for me.” She also described “being tired all the time. And I was really jealous of the people who could work part-time or not work, just do their CPE, because I didn’t have that luxury...I couldn’t find a way to do that.” Connie confided, “I think that I probably would have stayed in the process if I could have found a way to do that, maybe someplace else with another supervisor. But it just wasn’t to be.”

When asked about her spirituality during that time, Connie answered, “It was pretty narrow.” She remembered, though, that her work with students nourished her spiritually. Realizing the value of spiritual nurture from her own CPE experience, Connie made sure that her student groups were challenged to have “some kind of prayer or reading or something that would be spiritually uplifting.” She recalled,

We did that and I think that’s probably where I got most of my relationship with God during that time---having students do that and I did it too. I tried really hard to keep my spiritual life together but it was very hard. I had a church and occasionally I would preach. I enjoyed my church, but I certainly didn’t get involved. There wasn’t any time for that. My pastor was supportive and he would ask me to assist him and do different things. I enjoyed that; it kept my ecclesiastical stuff going. But I would say that I was often in a valley.

Connie remembered previous experiences at Roman Catholic hospitals where she had done some of her CPE and had worked as a chaplain; those experiences seemed much more spiritual, and “I found myself longing for that.” Even though their standards may not have been as rigorous as in ACPE, Connie felt that the Catholic organizations built spiritual development into their expectations. “That isn’t always true in ACPE, unfortunately. And I think we’ve missed the boat there,” she added. “...it wasn’t a wonderful time for my spiritual life. Desert comes to mind. Valley comes to mind.”

As noted earlier, Connie was in certification while ACPE as an organization was going through major changes in the early ^{1990s} 1990’s. About the certification process (especially since she had had an “old boy” as a supervisor), Connie commented that she was “very eager to go through the stuff, but never sure where she was going...what the rules were.” For example, Connie said she would read the Certification Manual, would talk with her supervisor about it, and would come to an understanding of the requirements and procedures. Later, at peer group, her peers would say to her, “No, No, that wasn’t the way it was.” She recalled, “It was a real time of change and now I think they have they seem to have a structure that they know how to walk through.”

Connie characterized the process as being like a maze rather than a path with clear landmarks: “You thought you were going in the right direction. And then they’d tell you, ‘Oh no, you’ve got to have your theory papers.’” Connie discovered that she should have been working on her papers for the preceding year. In the certification process about four years, Connie had an apt analogy for her feelings of confusion: “It was kind of like trying to work with a balloon that kept going toward the sky...you just couldn’t grab the thing.”

Even though both she and her peers persevered, the steps in the process always seemed vague.

Connie enjoyed working to develop her theory and even considered finishing the papers after she left the process. “Committee experiences were always interesting; I think they’re a very good preparation for real life,” Connie observed because it was important to learn how to navigate through them and to be well prepared under the pressure. Encountering “these enigmatic people on your committees” all seemed “like a rite of passage” to Connie. “It was a difficult experience,” she acknowledged; “I always felt the tension between how it used to be, very psychological, and how it was trying to move to [be more] educational.”

The power dynamics in the organization were clear to Connie. She always felt a part of ACPE and worked on regional committees that provided opportunities to share power, but she saw the supervisors as holding real power; they were the ones who sat on certification committees. She was accorded respect on some issues, but at other times, Connie felt that supervisors were not respectful about her actions or thinking. During her time with the organization, she observed increasing sensitivity toward women, gays, and lesbians, and she witnessed the desire for more ethnic diversity. Connie was skeptical, however, wondering if that desire arose partly from a drive for self-preservation. Connie thought that openness to diversity was motivated by institutional needs to recruit more students for programs, and diversity was good for students as well as the programs. Connie clearly believed that the organizational structure allowed for exploitation; indeed, she felt that she was exploited when she was asked to be responsible for too much of

what was really her supervisor's responsibility. "That just hit me between the eyes," Connie said, "I'd been really exploited."

Connie learned a lot from her experience in supervisory education. She always felt that she had a "pretty good voice." "I discovered it more," she claimed. "You always learn when you work with students," Connie added. She was eager to share why she had left the process. She also wanted me to know that she agreed to the interview with me because I had said that she "left the process," not that "she failed. Connie's supervisors knew her well, knew her work, and felt comfortable with her process; yet when she left the process, they referred to her choice as "failed" the next time she saw them.

And the several times it happened, I was angry and hurt as I felt that nothing I had done all those years made any difference to them. They had such a narrow focus on CPE that if you left you failed. You didn't make another choice, you failed. My committee appearances went well; my papers were done well. There was nothing "failure" about it. I made another choice. And I'm very successful with the choice I made.

Connie is a clinical member of ACPE and still participates in conferences and committee work. "Not everybody is going to be a supervisor," she said. Connie stays committed to the organization because it is part of who she is: "I'm a chaplain for God's sake!"

"Janet"

The sudden death of her beloved pastor was the event that framed the beginning of Janet's journey in ministry; he had had a heart attack while preaching one Sunday morning. This long term pastor from Janet's home church had seen her grow up, had watched her go off to college, and then had welcomed her back as she got fully involved in the church, teaching and doing prayer studies and bible studies. He was the most significant influence on her early pastoral formation. His death was traumatic for Janet,

and it also led to a spiritual awakening in her. Her calling emerged at his death and “blessed me to move forward.” Janet illustrated her experience with the story from Isaiah 6: “In the year that King Uzziah died, God showed Godself to Isaiah...when Isaiah received his call and went over to do what God wanted him to do.”

One thing I knew was if my pastor had stayed around I probably would have stayed there and been his assistant. Just kind of stayed in my little small hometown, not venturing forth to do the kinds of things I know that God has now called me to do.

The death had thrown Janet into a “whirl spin,” and she could not figure out what she should do until she had a dream one night. In the dream, her pastor came back and said, “You need to go forward.”

I use that story to tell my students who I am and how I’ve come to be who I am. And I have not yet been able to tell the story without tears coming to my eyes. He was such a powerful person and periodically in my dreams he will show up again. And usually when I’m kind of floundering and trying to figure out what direction I’m supposed to move in. And I always get some assurance that ‘Just keep putting one foot in front of another and you’ll get to where you want to get to.’

Janet’s pastor died in May of 1984, and she entered seminary in September that same year, which “started the ball rolling in terms of where I would be headed for the next ten years.” From the beginning of seminary, Janet knew that she would go into parish ministry after graduation; hospital ministry was what she wanted to do. Janet described her denomination as one that “did not honor women” and that certainly did not give her any encouragement to pursue ordained ministry. “I lived out of that for a significant period of time,” Janet said, but fortunately her pastor did not fit the denominational mold. She recalled,

He encouraged me to do what I felt God was calling me to do, and he blessed me to do that. So I was able with his encouragement to kind of move forward in my journey of seeking licensure, seeking ordination, and then moving on to seminary

and doing my seminary training, knowing that I was going to seminary because I wanted to do chaplaincy.

In seminary, Janet discovered that she had two passions. The first was “ministry itself.” She remembers embracing her calling at age 25 and feeling it much earlier than that. Janet explained her second passion, teaching:

I had this passion for ministry and doing that in the context of the hospital, and with people in crisis who were dying and needing some support. But I also knew I loved to teach and that I wanted to find a way that I could bring those two pieces of myself together. In the CPE process, I was mentored by some really wonderful CPE supervisors and knew that was the way in which I would probably live out the two passions.

As good a learning experience as CPE was in 1987, Janet found “one piece that was missing...the diversity piece.” She was the only person of color in an all-white peer group. Her supervisors were white and also male. “I knew if I was going to continue my journey, which was to become a CPE supervisor, I would have to go somewhere where I could get that diversity piece,” Janet recalled. Janet was pleased and grateful that her chosen ACPE center accepted her as a supervisor-in-training. She had already had supervision for one unit from one of the female supervisor at that center, so beginning supervisory training involved a continuing supervisory relationship with her. Janet stayed in that mentoring relationship for more than a year.

She provided me with the base I needed, which was to learn how to supervise out of my culture and out of my heritage and to honor it while also balancing it against all the different cultures that I would come into contact with there.

Janet set goals and achieved them. She started the certification process in the fall of 1991 and was granted candidacy one year later.

Janet received wonderful support from her husband at the time. Her son was only two years old when their family relocated so that Janet could begin her training as a

supervisor, and for the most part, she had to do her certification work in the hours after she put her son to bed. “So I wrote all of my papers at 3:00 in the morning. Everybody was asleep, I was up writing,” she said. “That was very stressful and emotionally taxing, but also I was on a timeline,” Janet recalled; “I knew when I started the process in ‘91, by ‘94 I wanted to be certified as an associate supervisor. Fortunately it happened that way.” This segment of her process was relatively smooth. Janet acknowledged that many supportive people helped her get things along the way, including family and friends, church community, and work colleagues.

Power was an important theme issue for Janet. Her first supervisor, a woman of color, used an empowering supervisory style. Janet recalled, how as a woman of color growing up in American culture, she would often downplay her sense of agency in the world. “The power would be there and others would name it and claim it for me, but I could never do it myself.” At the time of her request for full certification, Janet’s committee recommended that she write a paper addressing how she understood her personal power to act and effect others. Janet struggled to claim that she had power and was going to use it. She realized that most of her models for power and authority came from men, and in many ways they abused and/or misused power. Janet knew she did not want such a model for power in her relationships with students. She needed a model of authority that was much more mutual; not “power over others” or “power under others,” but “power with others.” Her supervisor and mentor demonstrated this kind of authority with her.

Janet’s next supervisor, a Euro-American male, taught her more than any other supervisor about group dynamics, but her supervisory relationship with him was fraught with resistance and anger on her part. In retrospect, Janet realized that she moved from

her previous supervisory relationship to this one because she had to learn to stand apart from her mentor and develop on her own. Janet felt that to grow into her own supervisory style, she had to claim that she could be as good a supervisor as her mentor, or even better, which was difficult to do.

Due to deteriorating health, the male supervisor was not fully available, so Janet eventually renewed the supervisor relationship with her mentor. Despite her anger with the male supervisor, Janet learned from him about “how to leave relationships, claiming yourself apart from that relationship while perhaps needing to go back and use that relationship as a resource.” Janet grieved deeply when this supervisor died. About three months before his death, she had sent him her theory papers, but he was never able to read them. She shared with me, “I have come to really respect what he taught me in our supervisory relationship.”

Another supervisor, a Euro-American woman, helped Janet with the next hurdle, writing her theory papers. Janet admitted that she needed someone to provide structure for her and to push her to get the papers written. She said, “I can keep the thoughts in my head, I have all the ideas rolling around, but putting them down on paper is a little bit risky.” Two supervisors, who brought different perspectives, worked with her at the same time.

This Euro-American female supervisor helped me to get my papers ready for submission to the ACPE office – along with the African American male supervisor. I had two of them almost simultaneously as supervisors. They balanced each other very well. The African American male supervisor helped me to put my cultural perspective into the theory papers. The Euro-American supervisor helped me to put my cultural perspective in a form that could be heard and received by a predominantly Euro- American reading group. And that was important for me – to have both of them do that.

Janet took about twelve months to write her papers. One paper did not pass initially, but she quickly resubmitted it and it passed. Three months later, she successfully met the certification committee and became an Associate supervisor.

To help her integrate her theories, Janet utilized supervisory input beyond her immediate context. She had to learn how to “live in her heart,” which took awhile; it was much to live out of her rational side. This tendency related to cultural and family dynamics in her personal history:

I’ve really learned how to protect my heart. The way I’ve learned how to protect my heart was to stay in my head. That is still the place where I struggle in my supervision, and that will also be my growing edge. It will always be a place where I will continue to learn and bump up against. And that I can see extremely well in students who come in wrestling with the same things.

Janet’s comments struck me as an articulate and clear demonstration of the integration she had sought and developed.

Janet made intentional choices about the supervisors with whom she worked. As a woman of color, she was aware of several supervisors with whom she would not work because she did not believe they would respect her: “I would have ended up fighting with them much more than learning from them, so I was real careful about the people I chose.” All of Janet’s supervisors, she concluded, worked with her out of a sense of self-respect. Their model of supervision was also “to respect the person who is before them and respect them in their wholeness.” Respect was important for Janet’s experience, and she has made it part of her supervisory methodology with students.

Respect of themselves; who they were as cultural persons; who they were as gender persons; who they were as faith persons. All of that was modeled for me. I didn’t have to change anything about who I was and I didn’t need to have them change anything about who they were. The self-respect and the mutuality was a part of the relationship. I really appreciated that in a supervisor.

The healing/wounding dynamic was a large piece of Janet's supervisory process. The relationship with the supervisor who was sick helped her to "bless" her anger. "I was angry with him, but I couldn't express the anger because he was sick," she explained; "Then I had to figure out a way in order to move the relationship further into connectedness, to get in the room in spite of his illness." Janet really appreciated his invitation for her to do that, and he did not push her away when she expressed her anger to him. This has been helpful to Janet as she has worked with students in their ministries with families and patients, where families cannot express their anger with patients because they are sick.

You can't give them the fullness of who you are. I think that's disrespectful of the person when you can't give all of who you are. So he modeled for me...it became a healing relationship around my own anger. I had been unable to honor my own anger and to bless it, and in some way bless it in other people. I sometimes want to run away from it, pretend that it doesn't exist. He invited me to be in dialogue with my anger and to know that the anger could lead to healing in relationships.

Janet also began to act on her curiosity about her history and heritage. Near the end of supervisory training, Janet's two male supervisors encouraged her to be more curious about herself and also to be more curious about others. "I would tend not to do that in my supervisory relationships with students," Janet said. Expressing curiosity was both scary and refreshing because, as Janet said, "I tend to be a private person" and "I can hold off parts of myself and not want to share that." When she works with students, Janet draws on her own experience in challenging them: "'Where is your curiosity? Use it! Let it guide you. Fantasize about this for a moment...' That kind of thing. That was extremely helpful to me," she affirmed.

Urged by her two male supervisors, Janet delved into her history and heritage. "I think those two supervisors pushed me to look at myself as an embodied person in light

of all the components of who I am, and not to discount any one of them,” she said; “No matter how painful; to embrace them and allow them to speak me into wholeness.” For a very long time, Janet recalled, she had wanted to see herself as a generic person with no gender and no ethnicity, someone “who operated out of just this...you were just this being who didn’t have any kind of embodiment whosoever.” Although Janet did not elaborate further, there was emotion in her voice.

A significant difficulty in Janet’s training process was the effort she had to expend to get what she needed: “Sometimes it appeared that I was always out there banging on doors, knocking on doors, saying ‘This is what I need; can I get it?’” Janet likened the situation to her parental relationship with her son: “Sometimes he needs to do things on his own; other times he needs my assistance. I have to know when to balance those.” She had had to ask persons to supervise her. “There wasn’t a mechanism in place where supervisors took on some of that accountability and some of that responsibility,” Janet said, and she suggested that self-learning may have been overemphasized at times.

When I asked Janet about the high points and the low points for her in the certification process, she was eager to start with the high points. As she told me, she usually focuses on the low points, and she wanted to do it differently. Not surprisingly, the two high points Janet mentioned were achieving associate supervisor and full supervisor. Then a low point immediately followed the high point of making associate. “Okay, so what do you do now?” she asked herself.

I know there’s another leg, but I don’t have to do it immediately, and it sent me into a depression. And that depression was probably one of the most wonderful things that occurred to me, even though at the time it didn’t feel like it. It forced me to deal with a lot of transitions that had occurred over the past ten years that I had not dealt with, going all the way back to the death of my pastor. He died; I went to seminary right after he died; I got married six months later; I had my son

a year and a half later. It was like things kept happening. I kept going from one thing to another. Finally, after I made associate, I had some time to just sit and be with me. It pushed me into a depression that helped me grieve the losses that occurred in my life as well as to grieve some of the good things that happened in my life.

Janet remembered the grief that came with becoming a mother, having to say goodbye to a part of herself that would never be again and having to embrace a part of herself she did not know anything about.

The high point of becoming fully certified “took a tremendous amount of emotional commitment on my part,” Janet revealed. She was “halted in her tracks” when her first attempt at full certification in the fall of 1996 was unsuccessful. “It wasn’t because the committee failed me,” she said; “It was because I wasn’t ready to meet the committee.” At the time, however, it was devastating to her because she had been able to progress rather quickly and smoothly up to that point. In retrospect, Janet realized that she was not ready; in the spring of that year she had separated from her husband and was again trying to make a major transition without fully dealing with the emotional aftermath. The certification decision forced her to deal with the grief around the loss of her marriage and to contemplate the next phase of her life for herself and her son. Janet saw her high points and low points as wedded together.

Janet’s critique of the certification process included the lack of adequate guidelines for theory papers and a closed mind-set about who qualifies as an appropriate primary theologian. Janet told me what had happened when she was told she could not use a particular person as a primary theologian.

And I said, ‘Well, why not?’ And they said, ‘He’s not a theologian.’ And I said, ‘According to whose standards?’ They said, ‘Well, he’s not taught in most of your dominant seminaries. I said, ‘Yeah, your dominant white seminaries? [she laughs] ‘Well, look at me, what do I look like to you?’ [we both laughed]

Janet's anger about this kept her from doing what she needed to do. Finally, however, she made her anger work for her as it pushed her to educate the white supervisors about the significance of this theologian's writings to people of color and how his theology could guide pastoral supervision. Having her choice of theological questioned by certain supervisors was the most distressing experience Janet encountered during the certification process. Janet set a goal of getting to know the chairs of certification committees staying in contact with them. When she made her second committee appearance for full certification, Janet requested to have a person of color on her committee, something she had never had before. Her request was granted without question.

There were times, Janet said, when she experienced the large group training system at their center was not well suited to small group process. Some students experienced these large group dynamics as abusive. When she met with committees, she would be challenged to respond to the question, "How did you protect your students from what they perceived to be an abusive system?" She helped students to talk about their participation in the group dynamics and how they could protect themselves. Janet learned how important it is to hold the same expectations for all students, and to guard against getting unmet needs met in her group of students.

When talking about resources for support, Janet named the CPE community, therapy, her friends and sisters, her music, and her relationship with God. CPE became Janet's church because they could speak and understand the same language. About therapy, Janet said, "I encourage it for anybody who goes through CPE and for every supervisor to stay in therapy, because there are issues you always need to address." When at a low point, Janet has learned to call in her reserves and go to her resources: "My reserves include my

friends, but they also include my sisters.” Janet is able to refocus and center herself by listening to the music of her culture. Janet’s her relationship with God has always been important to her, but her theology has changed, becoming more liberal and inclusive.

Janet claimed power for her dreams to inform her life: “I think one of the ways God is with me and speaks to me is in my dreams.” Her dreams are extremely vivid, often colorful, and point her toward directions to take in her life. One of Janet’s most powerful dreams symbolized her spiritual journey and “the sense that we need to know what’s binding us, what’s holding us down, what’s keeping us from being free and flying up.” Another dream with an animal image helps her to realize that she can’t always be flying but needs to get back on the ground and deal with real-life situations. Janet’s dreams always tell her that she needs to honor fully who she is. “Periodically, I have to go back and pull out some texts that help me to be reminded who God is in my life, and how I am in relationship to God.” Janet is an avid reader of Howard Thurman’s writings. Another writer of help to Janet is Kenneth Leech, specifically his insight that “our faith is grounded in our ability to question God and not be afraid to be in dialogue with God about the things we need to know about.”

“Karen”

Karen had dreamed of becoming a CPE Supervisor since she took her first unit of CPE in 1985. She was blessed with a strong female supervisory role model and was excited with what and how she was learning. Karen reflected on the passion that was stirred in that first unit: “I found myself having the capacity to really engage the (learning) process. I gained this awareness of myself, that I had insights and awareness about interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics that other people in the group did not

have.” Her ability valued by her supervisor, Karen became, she thinks, “that shining star golden girl kind of person.” Karen recalled, “She really supported me and encouraged me. In some ways, it felt like I was coming home.”

Karen’s initial attraction to CPE came out of a meaningful and life-giving experience she had with a pastor who was dying. Prior to this pastor’s death, she had been planning to follow a different path and had no inclination to take CPE. Karen described how she had worked with this particular pastor for three years as a seminary student, and he was the first person that she had ever accompanied during his dying. Karen told me that the experience “blew me out of the water!” His diagnosis came in the fall of her second year of seminary, and he died the following June, within a few weeks of her ordination. While the experience was meaningful, it was also very scary. Karen remembered,

What I did shortly after he died, was got in touch with all of the unresolved loss issues in my own life, got into therapy, and got in CPE. So it was coming off of that that contributed to my attraction to the CPE process. Here was this space that invited and challenged and confronted people to understand who they were and understand their story. How that forms and informs their ministry. Connected to that was a lot of ministry to people who were dying and dealing with those end-of-life issues.

For Karen to become a CPE supervisor, however, her denomination first required a minimum of three years’ experience in parish ministry. Once a parish minister, Karen thought that “it’ll never happen” and that her dream had “gotten away.” Financial constraints and her new husband’s work meant that Karen had to stay in a specific geographic area, which limited her options for supervisory training. Karen remembered her ambivalent feelings about the certification process. A close colleague was having an awful time in the process, which deeply affected Karen, and worked hard to differentiate

herself and her process from that of her colleague. Watching her colleague's struggle was "very, very, painful."

Karen recalled that the CPE community was male-oriented and "good old boy" in style. With hindsight, Karen realized that she was "a golden girl" in the eyes of the director and of her training supervisor. Karen saw some of her colleague's struggles as related to "a woman trying to be a part of this good old boys' club." Karen had limited experience with women supervisors, although she had had a woman supervisor for her very first unit of CPE. This supervisor continued to encourage Karen to develop her connections with the CPE community. Karen exclaimed, however, "It was SO male and SO good old boy in style. That was tough. That was real tough."

Karen expressed appreciation for all her training supervisors; she discussed the strengths and weaknesses of their supervisory approaches in relation to paradigms of respectfulness that I outlined for her. She claimed that she had tremendous respect for her training supervisor, and she experienced him as "incredibly respectful."

He used to be incredibly respectful of who I am and recognizes my gifts often times when I don't. Our relationship is very empowering. I think he trusts me in ways that I still probably don't trust myself. And that relationship from that perspective was and continues to be very healing.

Karen sees in retrospect that there were "some real significant pieces" of supervision that she "missed along the way." One missing piece was the lack of a mirror that would challenge Karen to reflect on what she could not see, given his acceptance and "grace filled approach." Karen also commented that she probably needed to be invited to "certain conversations" but "that didn't happen." Her supervisor had a great deal of confidence that Karen would get through the certification process, and he affirmed her effectiveness as a supervisor. On the other hand, he was not particularly curious about or

attentive to her learning process. Karen has a very collegial relationship with this supervisor; they like one another and enjoy laughing together. Karen further affirmed, “I felt like my boundaries have always been very respected and that my training supervisor has had good professional boundaries with me.”

Karen discussed her feelings of trust and anxiety around the certification process: “I think I’ve always had a trusting of my capacity to do that day-to-day supervision, be quite effective in my supervisory ministry, but not as trusting of the certification process.”

Karen’s anxiety surfaced as she described her first significant struggle, which occurred when she was denied full certification in the spring of 1999: “That, boy, my goodness, it was such a shock for me. And I recognized that I certainly contributed, and I brought my own stuff to the table, in retrospect.”

What happened was my shame really got triggered by that committee. I think that part of it was...some of the questions and the way that my presenter wanted more information. That felt and still feels inappropriate to me. It felt like the boundary was not appropriate there. And I did not respond to that well.

Afterward, Karen felt as though she were at an impasse for a while, in part because of miscommunication about what was required of her following the denial of full certification.

...there was some miscommunication and to this day I don’t think it was me, but I recognize that whenever two people communicate we all contribute our own stuff. I misunderstood. I had a conversation with our regional certification chair who was brand new at that time and who was on my committee. I understood there was not a need for me to meet an extension committee...Later, in the summer time, I understood again from him that I did not need to meet an extension committee.¹ This meeting, the national committee, served as that. Then about a month and a half after that I received word from him that, indeed, I had to meet an extension committee.

¹ After a two year period if the supervisory candidate does not become an associate supervisor, the candidate must meet a regional certification committee for an extension of candidacy.

Karen reflected that she did not stop at the time and say to the certification chair, “Time Out! Hold it! This is not what I understood.” Rather, she said “Okay, I’ll do it.” Karen then met the regional committee for an extension of associate supervisor status, which was denied. Karen said, “I acknowledge that certainly I brought my stuff to the table, but there were numerous logistical things that were way out of sync.” She elaborated on several issues that she felt needed to be challenged.

Karen filed an appeal of the regional committee decision. In the meantime, the organizational manual had been revised. After consultation, Karen decided to drop her appeal because she would have to meet another extension committee in any case. Karen said, “At that point in time, I decided it was more productive for me not to spend more energy on that. I had spoken my truth, I had challenged our organization on some pretty ugly stuff, and I needed to let that be.” Karen reported that in her last meeting with an extension committee, “I was very effective in meeting that committee.” That committee, Karen said, was “wonderfully supportive of my supervision.” The committee also provided to Karen a genuine recognition of the wrong that had been done. Karen expressed her thoughts about what happened: “I think at that time regions were being told to get some uniformity with how regions are handling things.”

In response to the denial of full certification, Karen began developing more support in areas she thought would bear fruit; she initiated regular consultation with a woman supervisor and went back into therapy. Karen also drew from a changing and deepening spiritual life.

At the same time, while I would not wish what happened to me on anybody, I am a transformed person because of it. That it confronted me to face my issues around shame in ways that I had not explored before. Not to that degree. And – this is moving into the next question about my relationship with God – something

that happened. I have always had an attraction to Eastern philosophy and religion. But another piece that happened about a year ago is that I began to study Buddhism. As a result of it, I understand and embrace the Christian paradigm much more deeply. It's quite the paradox.

Karen mentioned that she struggles as a clergywoman within her denominational structure, yet she really celebrates her community of faith. Karen is a part of a group of women who gather monthly on a Sunday morning in one of the women's homes: "There are between eight and maybe twelve of us and we have what we call Women's Church. That is a real significant part of my faith journey." She described the group as being made up of clergy, former clergy, another CPE supervisor, a couple of former nuns, and psychotherapists. She values the group as interesting and life-giving. "In many ways," Karen claimed, "they really are my community of faith."

Karen offered significant insights into the certification process. "I understand these to be pieces of my truth," she remarked; "I do see a need for transformation of our certification process. It is a shame-based process. I am not sure exactly what that transformation looks like. But I can see that it is shame-based." Karen gleaned this from her difficult, unsuccessful experience with the certification committee. What she learned from the experience she now brings to her students: "I have learned so much about being very respectful of students who may have shame dynamics in their life and how to engage them."

Karen described her views on power dynamics: "The power differential has been so much a "power-over" model in the certification process." A Jungian psychotherapist with whom Karen consults suggested to her that "our certification process depicts our 'corporate shadow.'" Karen concurs.

It's that the expectations that are placed in the certification process, the dynamics that can get played out, the kinds of questions that people are even asked in the certification process. It's the idea that 'you have to come to me,' meaning the certification committee, rather than.... Why doesn't the certification commission take a look at a day-to-day experience of a supervisor and glean that kind of information? In so many words, when I didn't make my extension committee, I was indirectly told that the committee really didn't have a whole lot of concern about my day-to-day supervision or would I ever abuse a student, but really saw me invested in the process and really invested in my supervision and acknowledged the high 4's and 5's that I get on my consumer evaluation...but somehow I didn't do what they were asking of me...that I was not certified. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense.

Karen reflected further on the 'corporate shadow' in ACPE. She believes that the shadow relates to clergy who tend to have issues around pretty low self-esteem, "so we can create these expectations and requirements that are bigger than life." Karen commented that she has a friend who is Ph.D. psychologist who cannot believe the process. Karen repeated, "We make these expectations bigger than life."

Sharing her insights about issues of diversity and power in ACPE, Karen expressed appreciation for the attempt to be sensitive by including a woman on the certification committee if a woman is presenting, but she sees this as a limited beginning. The presence of one woman with four men on a certification committee does not adequately address the inequity in gender power, Karen believes. "We have a long way to go," she concluded.

I have tremendous compassion for culturally, historically what has been going on. It's not easy for the feminine; it's not easy for the masculine either. I want to acknowledge that...I think I see some movement and I hope that somehow we're moving toward a 'power-with' than a 'power-over' model. And I see that that's one of the things I have to offer our organization. Modeling that style of supervision, style of being.

Karen stated that she has "found her voice" and has "learned to trust it." There are some pockets within ACPE that have become significant communities to her. When

Karen reflected on the CPE culture that has shaped her, she thought about the good-old-boys system.

I think about that style and way of being, almost the hazing experience that the certification process has been like. Once you get through it, 'Okay, you're in and we love you.' I don't know if that's really shaped me. I'm sure I've been impacted by it. I have found myself resisting that and wanting to model another way.

Karen concluded our interview with a thoughtful and compassionate theological reflection that has come from her own personal work.

I really do understand and believe that our essence is good and that all of us ultimately want to live out of that goodness. There's always stuff that gets in the way, and oftentimes that can become pretty significant in driving our lives and we get disillusioned into understanding that those things are important and become truth. So it really is from continuing to do my own work and connect with extended family....I recently attended a family reunion where I saw some relatives I hadn't seen in a number of years...having that kind of compassion for them. Understanding they too are products of their own story. Ultimately everybody is doing the best they can. I recognize that's how systems get put into place. Nonetheless, they still need to be challenged.

CHAPTER 6

Reflections on the Women's Stories

Introductory Remarks

In approaching the women's stories, several caveats need to be mentioned. The first pertains to the narration. In order to protect confidentiality, I could not include transcripts of the interviews in their entirety; instead, I chose to narrate material from the interviews. My voice as the narrator, though intended to convey the interview material as faithfully as possible, sets a certain tone in the stories. As a pastor looking with eyes of compassion, I see the interviewees as women of faith who have managed to draw upon their strength and personal power to develop into the kinds of women ministers they want to become. This perspective is embodied in the way I present the women's stories, and I believe that the rough and disturbing places in their stories may have been minimized or smoothed over.

Another problem is that the sensitizing questions were gentle and evocative, intended to stimulate memories of experiences that had already been integrated. The questions were designed to ensure safety and comfort for the interviewees and allowed them to withhold information if they wanted to.¹ This methodological approach may have kept some of the most painful memories and hard edges from surfacing. In addition, my choice of telephone interviews rather than face-to-face interviews could have limited the human connection that could provide the energy and support needed for the women to uncover and share aspects of their stories that were emotionally rich.

¹ Birren and Deutchman, 66.

Taken as a whole, the women's accounts come across as stories of triumph over hardships encountered when entering a male-dominated professional arena. This aspect of their experience can thus be compared and contrasted to the entry of women into other male-dominated professions. Several women mentioned that they underwent hazing by their male colleagues and experienced the "old boys' club" as intimidating and controlling access to knowledge and resources. In the early 1980s, Maureen chose to adopt aggressive and hostile behaviors in order to stand up to particular males by whom she felt intimidated. Sara was encouraged by her supervisors to fight for her survival in the profession. Their stories are likely similar to those of women entering other fields such as medicine. On the other hand, the uniqueness of the CPE educational model and the vulnerability implicit in pastoral relationships combine to make supervisory education for women under these circumstances a risky choice, psychologically and spiritually. After hearing the women's stories and including my own experience, I contend that the life-giving, creative part of this learning process is accompanied by a shadow side that can be devastating to both female and male pastors.

Although some of the women represented in these stories have been pioneers for other women, they do not present themselves as such. Like the women in Buford's study, the women whom I interviewed did not set out to be pioneers. Rather, they felt drawn to becoming CPE supervisors out of the transformative nature of their own experiences as CPE students: the joy of learning and growing; the affirmation of their experience of life; and the freedom and satisfaction gained in following interests and dreams and in exercising their particular gifts for service. In this respect, I certainly honor and celebrate the women's accomplishments. For the most part, the women seem to have integrated

and transcended the difficult places in their stories. Basing conclusions only on this interpretation, however, may not get to deeper truths that provide a more complete and trustworthy interpretation of their experience based on theological and ethical perspectives.

Interpretive Lens

Before beginning my analysis and reflection, I want to affirm that the stories have internal integrity and speak their own truth in a particular way for each woman, and I honor the experience of the women and the truths embedded in their stories. In a feminist-oriented gender study such as this, there are multiple and multifaceted angles on truth rather than a single, fundamental organizing truth.² Who we are, how we relate to various power systems in the culture, and what our past experiences have been all shape the way and the perspective from which we construct truth.³ This means that the stories have significance for understanding identity and relationships, but they also represent structures of epistemology (how we know what we know) and culture (how we make meaning of the symbols, artifacts, and systems that shape us and form the world in which we live).

I appreciate the focus that Neuger places on current methods used in gender studies for the development of liberating pastoral practices. Through offering a broad analysis of social order and human behavior in which gender is an integral element, we can move beyond previous limitations. Rather than studying differences or perspectives built on dualistic “black and white” categories of oppressor and oppressed, we can expand our vision to include particularities, which helps us move “to a larger acknowledgement of

² Neuger, 6.

³ Ibid., 7.

the variety of power systems that organize the culture into systems of dominance and subordination.”⁴ The representation of these women’s stories reclaims women’s voices so that they can be built into the meaning-making processes and theories of the CPE culture, working to undo the harm that has resulted from the missing and distorted perspectives that currently prevail.⁵

My reflection is intended to present a version of truth that is critical and trustworthy and that offers a prophetic voice to the CPE community; I seek to plumb the truths embedded in the women’s stories and bring them out from semi-consciousness into the light of greater consciousness. I use a feminist and womanist theological and ethical interpretive lens to deconstruct, reclaim, and reconstruct meanings in the stories. Neuger observes that the deconstructive work of feminist and other liberation methodologies has been crucial in providing enough critical distance so that reclaiming and reconstructive work can begin.⁶ The three approaches – deconstructive, reclaiming and reconstructive – “work together in processive, spiral ways to create feminist, womanist scholarship and to build liberating, effective, and empowering practices.”⁷

General Impressions of the Living Human Documents as a Whole

My initial reading of the stories revealed that there were fewer apparent dangerous memories than I had expected to find. The stories I heard pointed to some problem areas to be addressed by an ethic of relational justice, but as a whole, they did not contain huge expressions of vulnerability, distress, anger, or concern. There was one exception. I felt

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 8.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. Neuger cites Christie Cozad Neuger and James Poling, eds., The Care of Men (Nashville: Abingdon, 1997) chap.1.

that Elaine's anger and constructive aggression about the certification process and racism in the culture was a strong critical response. With this notable exception, nothing else struck me as demanding immediate action for the purpose of righting relationships and creating relational justice.

In my general reading of the texts, negative responses and memories seemed to recede to the background of the stories while positive responses and memories occupied the foreground. The foreground material highlighted the particular gifts of the women to use the certification process to persevere through impasses, to find their voice and achieve clarity, and to overcome adversities. These were the themes in the dominant plot of each story. The sense of triumph and integrity was also present in the story of the woman who left the certification process.

To get a clearer sense of the painful devaluing aspects in the stories and their impact on the women, I designed a coding system and applied positive and negative valuations to specific responses to the interview questions. Using this analytic approach, I found that, out of 89 responses, approximately one-third of the responses described negative and devaluing experiences while two-thirds were positive and valuing.⁸ Even given this clear evidence that the women had endured painful, devaluing experiences in their certification process, I was surprised that their responses were generally more positive than I would have guessed. I recalled that Buford had stated that she was also surprised by her findings; she, too, had thought that her research would have uncovered more critical responses and "war stories."⁹ Buford's conclusions did not match her innate sense

⁸ Appendix X. I systematically went through the transcripts of the interviews and noted all responses to questions 3 through 8. I isolated 89 specific concepts and coded them based on their expression of positive and negative responses.

⁹ Buford, 320.

about her findings. This realization, coupled with my intuition and previous experience, gave me a clue that it would be premature to conclude that strong negative findings did not exist. My sense, instead, was that the memories and stories remained suppressed and more deeply hidden than I had anticipated.

Catherine Kohler Riessman's understanding of what can and cannot be derived from narrative studies is important here. According to Riessman, "a personal narrative is not meant to be read as an exact record of what happened nor is it a mirror of the world 'out there.'" ¹⁰ Narrative assumes a point of view. She says,

It is always possible to narrate the same events in radically different ways, depending on the values and interests of the narrator. Telling about complex and troubling events *should* vary because the past is a selective reconstruction. Individuals exclude experiences that undermine the current identities they wish to claim. ¹¹

The test of validity of narrative is the historical truth of a person's account but in its sense of trustworthiness in ^{#10 -} women I interviewed may have excluded or minimized ex ^{check info} to their current identities. Another important point is that, ^{add to} "ent" and "have agendas

them that shape what gets excluded and included so that "fact and fiction" the stories that people live by are rarely, if ever, radically constructed. In other are not made-up "out of the blue." ¹³ According to White, "Our culturally

available and appropriate stories about personhood and about relationships have been historically constructed and negotiated in communities of persons, and within the context

¹⁰ Catherine Kohler Riessman, Narrative Analysis (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993), 64.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 65. Riessman citing J. Bruner, "Life as Narrative," Social Research, 54 no.1 (1987):11-32.

¹³ Ibid., Riessman citing M. White, "Deconstruction and Therapy," in Experience, Contradiction, Narrative, and Imagination, eds. D. Epston and M. White (South Australia: Dulwich Centre, 1992), 124.

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of social structures and institutions.”¹⁴ This theory supports my view that, as the women have become more a part of mainstream CPE culture through certification and leadership roles in ACPE, their stories increasingly tend to reflect dominant cultural perspectives rather than critical perspectives that go against the grain of that culture. As a feminist pastoral educator, I am concerned with protecting the humanity of women and men together in the midst of the patriarchal nature of the church and with securing health and relational justice in ACPE as a subculture and institution of the church.

I therefore believe that it is important to move beyond a first level of interpretation of the stories as they stand. I seek to move to a deeper level interpretation, utilizing a hermeneutic of suspicion that deconstructs the narrative and looks for the “not-so-innocent subplots” in the shadows, the subplots that were suggested but not fully explicit in the stories.

Deconstructive Listening to the Text

Connie mentioned discussing with her supervisor the painful situation of a female who was sexually exploited by a male supervisor (in the early 1990s) and how her supervisor’s attitude was hurtful because he struggled to maintain a sense of disbelief and blamed the woman. By looking into and beyond Connie’s story to the unnamed woman at the center of that hurtful discussion that Connie had with her supervisor, we find an embedded truth in her story that needs acknowledgement. Connie’s memory clearly points to sin and evil in the ACPE community, as well as in the larger church and culture. I believe, with Rebecca Chopp, that “as in all the dominant discourses of our culture, there is a repressed margin which, standing on the edge of language, marks the space of

¹⁴ Ibid.

women's eclipsed theological voice."¹⁵ This means that other women we discover at the margins of the CPE culture in the women's stories – women who are not talking for themselves but who are mentioned in the interviewee's stories – have an important voice to add to our theological perspective. The women tend to be invisible and their voices are eclipsed into the shadows. Without discussing it openly, Sara alluded to an environment of sexual harassment and exploitation in the 1980s. Neuger notes our participation in the hiddenness when "we as a culture and as a church, have consistently made the decision to side with the perpetrator" through our silence and through silencing, usually through disbelief.¹⁶

One of the keys to recovery from the traumatizing effects of intimate violence is the ability to remember and to tell the truth about these experiences of betrayal and to be believed. Without the community of belief, the trauma does not get resolved.¹⁷

Recalling Herman's point that there are no innocent bystanders,¹⁸ we see that collusion with perpetrators is encouraged by the primary strategy of secrecy and the universal desire to hear no evil, see no evil, and speak no evil. Then, if secrecy does not work, the victim's credibility is questioned, and rationalizations are offered as to why it was not abuse that occurred. Victims of sexual exploitation are intimidated in one way or another, and they face further losses or wounding.¹⁹

¹⁵ Serene Jones citing Rebecca S. Chopp, "Women's Experiences Between a Rock and a Hard Place" in Horizons in Feminist Theology, ed. Rebecca S. Chopp and Sheila Greeve Davaney (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1997), 51.

¹⁶ Neuger, 94.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid. Neuger citing Judith Lewis Herman in Trauma and Recovery, 8.

¹⁹ Ibid.

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Theological Reflection and Pastoral Concerns

Our theological reflection and pastoral concern are warranted to help us muster the courage to confront sin and evil in its particular guises and to unmask its harm. James Poling helps us understand how the evil inherent in these situations is the abuse of power that destroys bodies and spirits; evil is holistic and persistent.²⁰ Poling also suggests that evil always has a dual nature; it exists yet it is hidden. Evil is a perversion of spirit, not an independent spirit of opposition; it draws on the power of life and love as the source of its power.²¹ Rather than deny, sequester, or rationalize evil, I believe that we must hear, see, and speak the truth about the evil of sexual harassment and exploitation that will not go away. I agree with Poling that God “has given us personal and social power for the purposes of enhancing value for individuals and for the relational web. When this power is instead used for destruction to individuals and to the relational web itself, those actions are evil.”²²

Some members of ACPE have assumed an advocacy role, but very little has been published concerning sexual exploitation in ACPE. The exception is the current work of George Fitchett and Marilyn Johnson.²³ They conducted a study researching the extent of the problem of sexual exploitation in the ACPE community among CPE supervisors and students. They gathered data by sending out questionnaires to a targeted population. It is notable that 62% of those sent the questionnaire returned their responses to an extensive survey. This indicates a level of support and interest in the study. Thirteen percent of the

²⁰ James Newton Poling, Deliver Us from Evil: Resisting Racial and Gender Oppression (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1996), 114-125.

²¹ Ibid., 119.

²² Ibid., 114.

²³ George Fitchett and Marilyn Johnson, “Intimate Sexual Contact in the CPE Supervisor-Student Relationship,” Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry 21 (2001): page(s).

male supervisors and 5% of the female supervisors reported intimate sexual contact with a student either during or after training. In retrospect, 65% of the supervisors and 86% of the students view the contacts as moderate or serious professional misconduct. In summary, for many students and some of the supervisors, the experience was a source of pain, confusion, guilt and anger. For a few that pain is still intense and unresolved. A few students and supervisors described the experience as mutual and enjoyable.²⁴ Based on their research findings Fitchett and Johnson suggest four areas of attention for ACPE:²⁵ (1) the need to clarify the types of sexual contact that are permissible, i.e. around touch, (2) further attention to its complaint procedure as a vehicle for justice and healing, (3) concern for the unexpressed and unresolved feelings sexual encounters have engendered among members of ACPE, and (4) concern for the harmful effects of sexual comments made to students during training, i.e. at CPE meetings and certification committee appearances. This study marks a healthy beginning of getting clearer about many aspects of sexual contact and exploitation between supervisors and students. However, the results are not definitive about the frequency of such occurrences. Continuing studies in this area and the pursuit of real statistics could help the community come to greater accountability.

A number of present realities reflect improvement and increased consciousness about harassment and exploitation. These include the following: I have personally observed that the ACPE professional code of ethics is taken seriously; peer review is no longer optional but is mandated for supervisors; women supervisors have forged a stronger, collegial model of relating; grievance policies offer more protection from exploitation than in the past; and code and rule enforcement is more consistent, and violations are

²⁴ Ibid., 90.

²⁵ Ibid., 108-109.

acted upon. Several of the women I interviewed mentioned similar positive changes out of their experience. Whether these changes have brought about a community that is motivated toward relational justice remains questionable. Several of the women I interviewed addressed this open question in a variety of ways. For example, Connie expressed the thought that there was a stronghold of persons in ACPE who were acting more out of self-interest than out of an orientation to service. Karen had a healthy collegial relationship with her male supervisor, yet she was highly ambivalent about getting involved with people in the organization because she felt vulnerable with the male-to-female dynamics she had experienced.

Secrets still abound. The strategy of secrecy is clearly exemplified by the secrecy around ethics violations. Information about the number of grievances brought forth and the ethics violations that have occurred in ACPE is not accessible to the ACPE membership.²⁶ How can justice possibly be accomplished without an awareness of the real issues and frequency of problems that perpetuate injustice and that need healing within the community? I am advocating for full disclosure of the identity of those against whom grievances have been filed, not for the purpose of placing fault on particular individuals but for holding our community accountable for continuing growth toward relational justice. How can we as a community grow more just without examining and evaluating how we contribute the persistence of evil and its power to destroy bodies, minds, and souls? Is it really helpful to ACPE to attempt to conceal a significant, painfully problematic reality? I think we in ACPE ought to become more proactive and fully examine, critique, and address the culture of CPE.

²⁶ Per my conversation with Art Schmidt, ACPE President-elect, at Pacific Region Conference, Hawaii, ~~March 31~~, 2003.

31 March

We can learn from the struggles and attempts at justice making in other communities of faith, particularly Protestant churches. In her groundbreaking work, Marie Fortune analyzes why it was impossible for women who had been sexually exploited in the church to receive the justice they deserved in order to heal. She concludes:

At least three dynamics seem to mitigate perfect justice and leave us with approximate justice in this situation: 'shooting the messenger,' misnaming the problem, and 'blaming the victim.' Each of these is an automatic, institutional response to the revelation of internal injustice. But each of these obstacles to justice represents the patriarchal nature (that is, the historical and contemporary domination by men) of the institution: This is key to answering our question. I finally realized that women will never find perfect justice in a patriarchal institution. We can only expect approximate justice, not because people are incapable of something more, but because patriarchy will not allow anything more.²⁷

Although Fortune's work is more than ten years old, it is still timely. This particular angle of vision is revelatory and prophetic for the community of faith that is interested in not just talking about justice, but in making it. Maureen's experience in a national leadership position in the mid-1990s convinced her that ACPE would not engage seriously in justice-making unless forced to by legal means. Although Maureen did not say this, I am convinced that what caused her to feel such ambivalence and to question her competence as a leader was the same issue that Fortune articulates. Maureen could no longer tolerate the dissonance she felt when participating in a group that could not respond with the justice that the victims of exploitation deserved. Maureen's dilemma leads me to this question: what are the bonds that prevent us from making justice in ACPE? What can we do to loosen those bonds and to increase our capacity in any

²⁷ Marie M. Fortune, Is Nothing Sacred?: When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1989), 120.

organization to make justice? The norm seems to be to presume that we are doing fine, unless or until some gross tragedy comes to light.

Every woman interviewed told a particular story about how unfair attitudes affected her certification process. These stories included breaches of trust, exploitation, wounding, unfair practices of certification committees, and the necessity of making room for oneself in an inhospitable space. Anne still sounds the alert, after many years in ACPE and much experience as an agent of change, that certain presumptive attitudes in the organization remain problematic, more so than organizational structures. During her supervisory training in the 1970s, on the way to certification, Anne garnered support from her female colleagues and students to challenge dominant stereotypes and assumptions. Although the old stereotypes of women that Buford also mentions are no longer operative in keeping white women from realizing their vocational goals, the tendency to stereotype remains.

Both women of color whom I interviewed, Elaine and Janet, discussed elements of racism that they encountered in the certification process. Elaine did not feel that she was seen by her certification committee for who she really was – as a woman of strength, resource, and creativity in the midst of cultural influences that she valued and that helped her people in a racist world. Instead, she was seen as a dysfunctional overachiever, and her request for candidacy was denied as a result. Janet's theology paper was rejected because she used a black theologian. Womanist writers such as Patricia Collins Hill²⁸ and bell hooks²⁹ have illuminated particular stereotypes the culture has adopted for black women "to keep them in their place." Stereotyping functions in a particular way in the

²⁸ Patricia Collins Hill, Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1991), 67-90.

²⁹ bell hooks, Killing Rage: Ending Racism (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1995), 77-85.

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social order. Stereotypical images serve to support the maintenance of prevailing arrangements of social power. In other womanist literature, according to the social analyst Carby, the purpose of stereotypes is not to reflect reality accurately but to serve as a disguise for social reality.³⁰ This disguise for social reality serves many purposes: “It soothed the conscience of a society whose espoused ideals were blatantly contradicted by the behaviors of its members.”³¹ Might this womanist perspective serve as a warning for us to look deeper into the face of sin and evil for the purpose of embodying the *imago dei*, rather than settling into complacent contentment with our “sensitivity to diversity.” Our ways may not be serving the people of God.

In the fall of 2001, while I was working on this project, I attended the annual meeting of the Pacific Region of ACPE in San Diego. The program included a presentation by panel members who were leaders in ACPE and were particularly familiar with the work of the national Certification Commission and the nine regional Certification Committees. David Myler, a supervisor from the Pacific Region, introduced the idea that there was a “gate-keeping function” with the certification process that actively sabotaged desirable prospective supervisory students as they attempted to enter the ACPE ranks. The open discussion that followed sounded like a “tower of Babel.” I saw that there was so much energy, it could not be harnessed. Myler had struck a nerve in the community, in some cases a very raw nerve. Although occupants of formal roles of authority were present, in this discussion there were no experts. The designated facilitator Donna Duensing understandably struggled to bring the energy in the large group to a point where dialogue

³⁰ Lillian Comas-Diaz and Beverly Greene, Women of Color: Integrating Ethnic and Gender Identities in Psychotherapy (New York: Guilford Press, 1994), 17.

³¹ Ibid.

could occur. In addition, the all-white, male panel was offensive, particularly to the women of color, and Myler gave up his seat of privilege on the panel and invited a woman of color to take his place so her voice could be heard as a speaker. While the session was not pleasant for anyone, I believe that the Spirit was in our midst, stirring us up, disrupting the status quo, and making us uncomfortable. The social order was reversed for a moment and was stood on its head.

The parables of Jesus come to mind. In parables, God breaks into to ordinary reality and turns it upside down, in order for us to pay attention and to get ready to hear a message we need to hear for all our sakes. I agree with Neuger that the assumption of many of the parables “is that the realities accepted by the dominant culture obscure truth.”³² She adds, “people have learned to believe lies and, thus, to put their own lives in danger and distress.”³³ What lies have we learned to believe about our professional community? It seems to me that the stories of the women point us toward greater truth-telling because of their courage to name problems in the community, but both women and men are at risk for creating particular fantasies about the goodness of ACPE as an organization that promotes nothing but good. The singular focus of CPE as a transforming agent in ministers’ lives serves to deny the reality of sin and evil as another active agent in our midst. I trust and believe Karen when she says that this reality, which she names “the corporate shadow,” is quite alive and well in the certification process. For instance, Karen, Sara, Lynn and others have commented that psychological boundaries are crossed with the types of questions that supervisors ask of candidates during

³² Neuger, 136.

³³ Ibid.

certification committee appearances. They have come to expect this kind of violation and have strategized in an attempt to prepare themselves for it.

Most of the women I interviewed said that ACPE clinical training programs and learning environments had provided a sanctuary of acceptance and a crucible for empowerment. That reality does not mitigate the real dangers, however. The learning environment (which includes supervisors) and the certification process call participants to increased vulnerability, and the potential danger for wounding grows as the student gains deeper access to the vulnerable self. I believe that respecting and caring for human vulnerability is at the very essence of the practice of pastoral care, and they are the attitudes and skills we model and teach those who come to us in CPE for our specialized theological education. We cannot afford to stop looking at any of these issues, even if we think all appears to be well (no gross violations) and even if we deem our organizational structures adequate for handling grievances. Evil is persistent in its existence and hiddenness in human community. Evil never goes away; it masquerades in disguise, and turns in on the spirit of life and love, perverting its good. The guiding assumption in the parables of Jesus can bring us to a place of clarity about the truths we are obscuring, including the truths we are obscuring in ACPE. In other words, one way truth can be revealed is by having things turned upside down; the chaos of being turned upside down may allow new perspectives on truth to emerge.³⁴

Resources for Care of the Community

There is a certain life energy and wisdom needed for the ethic of care that I am advocating for our community of pastoral educators and for the organization of ACPE. I

³⁴ Ibid.

nurtures hope and protects from despair. Despair occurs when we look for a type of innocence that does not admit our own will to power. Perhaps strategies like those Welch outlines will be less frustrating and more life-giving than current strategies if we generate and maintain the moral energy to effect change, knowing that our genuine commitments toward a social order that promotes relational justice will always be mixed with our own will to power. Welch offers this insight:

The focus of moral energy is learning to appreciate the richness of difference and conflict—within the self and between individuals. These differences are not easily understood; nor always readily or smoothly resolved. The point is not to make the conflict go away, but to make it work for, rather than against life.⁴¹

I think that spirituality and ethics are companions. In nurturing one, we will nurture the other and produce creative energy.

Unfortunately, for many women in the certification process, maintaining their spirituality was a significant problem. Connie, Sara, Lynn, and Maureen all had difficulty in this area. As I listened to the women, I heard them say that their spirituality was not particularly valued, and they had a hard time themselves valuing their spiritual needs. They seemed lost on their spiritual journeys, and they described their experiences with images of spiritual thirst and hunger. Anne experienced a profound change, but that occurred as a result of her building collegial relationships with other women in which she was free to engage in dialogue and to discover a core part of herself that could not be expressed through male norms for theology or ministry. Only one woman attributed her supervisory training experience and certification process as helping her on her spiritual journey. Janet recalled that her CPE supervisory training experience allowed her a broader spirituality because she was encouraged to embrace her doubt and uncertainty as

⁴¹ Ibid., 46.

am reminded of Sara's and Elaine's comments that it is wise to pick one's battles and use one's energy for enhancing life. Both of these women, while seeking certification as supervisor, suppressed a certain amount of critique and constructive aggression to guard against possible backlash or backfire that could destroy their chances to achieve their goal. Later, after time passed and they achieved certification, they were able to exercise their voices and use them in leadership roles. I believe that experiences like those of Sara and Elaine are quite common; both men and women enter supervisory training with fresh eyes and ears and have valuable critique to share about the certification process but they often do not. The truth of their perspective and experience is not fully honored because it points to the training supervisor's vulnerabilities. As newcomers adapt to the CPE culture, their valuable insight and input may be lost.

As educators, we must be mindful of what we teach through our practices, for we too are the curriculum. Bell Hooks suggests that for education to be the practice of freedom, it is necessary to bring critique on every level.³⁵ Critique plays a valuable role in allowing to emerge truths that we tend to obscure. Those who have the freshest eyes often see the illusions that we have come to embrace as real and good. Encouraging critical thinking rather than accommodation is the better teaching method and will serve to stimulate our excitement for life-long learning and growth.³⁶ Hooks, for example, tells the story of a young man in her college classroom who claimed that he learned from her "openness," in contrast to the other arenas in his life. Through critical thinking and by reading and actively analyzing texts, he learned that there were many kinds of choices and many

³⁵ Bell Hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 6.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

kinds of logic. His excitement and sense of freedom increased as he realized that he could make the events mean whatever he wanted them to mean as long as he was honest.³⁷ As pastoral educators, we could rely more upon our own understandings of educational theory to help us learn how to strengthen the ethic of care needed for making relational justice.

Elaine also reminded us that others in supervisory training – especially those who are racially, culturally, and religiously different than our present membership – may get tired of the insensitivity and realize that they deserve to be valued more than what ACPE offers them as they seek certification. Elaine wanted to see God break through in some way that would help ACPE value much more such persons and their stories. I find a correlation between Elaine's claim that supervisors consulting on certification committees can be hurtful to those making appearances for certification because they have not done their homework and the work demands upon those supervisors. In a recent article in the ACPE newsletter, current president Jim Gibbons pointed out that, given the multiple responsibilities of supervisors and the increasing demands of our hospital institutions, our work ethic pertaining to volunteer jobs within ACPE needs attention. We currently expect heroic measures from supervisors who are consultants for certification and accreditation, but better stewardship is needed.³⁸ There is practical wisdom here, but also an indication of a vulnerability that has spiritual implications. Sometimes evil masks itself in heroic images or in an abundance of good work; yet souls are rendered vulnerable and bodies and spirits destroyed, both male and female. Connie, for instance,

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ James L. Gibbons, "President's Column: On My Screen," ACPE News, ~~ACPE, Inc~~ Nov./Dec. 2002, *pages*.

realized that she was participating in her own exploitation if she acceded to the expectation that she carry out her supervisor's work responsibilities during an accreditation review of the center.

Kathryn Tanner offers the important insight that – in a system that is exploitive of women, minorities, and the poor – “popular support is consolidated by incorporating popular values and beliefs without real concerns for the interests of people.”³⁹ I, too, wonder about the wisdom of some of our certification and accreditation practices. I agree with Gibbons that there is a need for reform in this area that makes professional life in ACPE and the certification process more humane and valuing for all. Like Tanner, I am informed by a feminist agenda that calls for careful critique of the way support is consolidated. In particular, normative practices and how the meaning of symbols is articulated should address the needs of supervisory students involved in the certification process; (in ACPE, for example, how the certification manual and the requirements for theory papers are considered normative).

Ethicist Sharon Welch⁴⁰ discusses ways to engage in an ethic of risk and care for the community amidst the hard work of justice making. Welch emphasizes the importance of maintaining high life-energy and a strong sense of self that is balanced with responsiveness to others, acting with full awareness of the danger and unpredictability in life. Rather than fighting against chaos, Welch calls for honoring the surprises and rolling with them. Sin and evil can be addressed through focusing a type of moral energy that

³⁹ Kathryn Tanner, “Social Theory Concerning the ‘New Social Movements’ and the Practice of Feminist Theology,” in Horizons in Feminist Theology: Identity Tradition and Norms, ed. Rebecca S. Chopp and Sheila Greeve Davaney, 190.

⁴⁰ Sharon D. Welch, Sweet Dreams in America: Making Ethics and Spirituality Work (New York: Routledge, 1999), 31-32.

a source for faith. In a supervisory training program designed to educate ministers to assist other ministers in learning the practice of pastoral care, I find this to be the most striking finding of the study. Where is God in this? New theologies that can speak to our own spiritual needs are desperately needed. ACPE aspires to be an inclusive learning community, rich in complexity and replete with diversity. What prevents us from living our theology as a part of the journey through certification? Perhaps the vulnerability involved in openly living one's theology is too great a risk for a majority of people. I have heard Maureen, Connie, and Elaine in agreement.

Concluding Remarks

Many of us, both women and men, have learned through our painful experiences that relationships with supervisors or the CPE community can be more wounding than we can tolerate. If it is true that our best theology is born out of our wounds, then it is also possible that those of us who have been hurt may be able to bring a special gift of grace in confronting the destructive aspects of our relational life and systems. In our diversity, we can embrace an image of God as relational justice. Who can we be and become because of God's love and grace?⁴²

I believe we are called to greater openness to the Spirit. In that call, however, I believe there is a warning that we need a stronger respect for our vulnerability. Certification is not our God, and ACPE is not our idol. A great deal of the energy in the organization is focused on certification, while the education of training supervisors to provide theory and curriculum for supervisory training suffers a lack of attention. Learning theory that gives guidance for promoting respect for both the supervisor's and

⁴² Neuger, 60.

the supervisee's vulnerability can be a source of help. I agree with hooks that a holistic model of learning promotes the growth of all involved, including the teacher. She stresses that empowerment will not happen if we refuse to be vulnerable ourselves while encouraging the students to take risks.⁴³ Furthermore, teachers "who expect students to share confessional narratives but who themselves are unwilling to share are exercising power in a manner that could be coercive."⁴⁴

We need a more highly developed consciousness of our CPE culture and how we make meaning and establish normative behaviors. William White reminds us that every organization has a sexual culture that governs boundaries controlling the expression of power, aggression, and sexuality.⁴⁵

Every organization can be said to have a culture. Each organization's culture can be described in terms of its history, traditions, heroes and heroines, values, symbols, slogans, rituals, and taboos.... In a similar manner, it can also be said that each organization has a sexual culture. The sexual culture defines the customs and etiquette that will guide professional and personal relationships between organizational members and between members and their service constituents. The sexual culture of an organization shapes a climate of respect or disrespect that can serve either to inhibit or to nurture exploitive behavior.⁴⁶

It is my impression that ACPE continues to struggle with the changes in society, in the organization, and in the felt sense of community. Rapid changes in health care add to the burden of constant adaptation. In order to envision a bright future for itself, ACPE will need to pursue further restoration of the community and healing from the past. Theological institutions and faith groups continue to value the potential of transformative learning for students in CPE programs, but according to some, ACPE apparently has less

⁴³ hooks, 21.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ William White, "A Systems Perspective on Sexual Exploitation of Clients by Professional Helpers," in Breach of Trust: Sexual Exploitation by Health Care Professionals and Clergy, ed. John C. Gonsioreck (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995), 186.

⁴⁶ This page.

of an institutional relationship with theological institutions and faith groups and is less an integral part of theological education than in the past.⁴⁷ I wonder if our CPE culture is holding us in a way from being open and vulnerable enough to encourage embodying the image of God as relational justice with the degree of accountability required. We can learn from the women's stories the importance of specific types of respect and the devastating consequences when respect is absent. Perhaps ACPE could create a culture of respect that would help us realize our potential to lead the effort in promoting strong and just relationships with other parts of the church and the world.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Jernigan, 387-392.

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APPENDIX

Sensitizing Questions for the Interview



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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT
Judith S. Roska, D. Min. Candidate

***REFLECTIONS ON WOMEN'S NARRATIVE STORIES
 AND THE CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION PROCESS***

SENSITIZING QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW

These questions are designed with the hope of engaging you in your story in a fresh way. They are meant to build for the purpose of tweaking your memory and sparking your creative imagination. It is not necessary to answer all the questions, rather let them lead you into sharing your story in the interview. Use them to jot down notes to serve as reminders, if you wish. Consider what the benefits are for you in sharing your story through participating in this interview, and what you would like to gain. You will also need to decide for yourself what you do not want to happen, and discuss any concerns you have with me before the interview.

- 1) In general, how would you describe your personal “journey” or “walk” as it relates to the CPE certification process? When did it begin? Where were you in your life and development? What were your life circumstances and important relationships?

- 2) How were you drawn to the particular ministry of CPE Supervision? How would you describe your attraction to this vocational direction?

- 3) From the time that you first considered yourself in the certification process to its completion, what was your relationship with your supervising supervisor(s) like? Use as spectrums the following set of terms to discuss dimensions of a respectful supervisory relationship as they pertain to each of your supervisory relationships.
 - empowering/not empowering
 - healing/wounding
 - encouraging of dialogue/discouraging of dialogue
 - supervisor positively and deeply curious about your motivation/not curious
 - supervisor models self-respect/does not model self-respect
 - supervisor attentive and a “watchful witness”/not attentive as a “watchful witness”
 - any other dimensions that you would want to add that are not mentioned above?

- 4) What was your internal experience of the process? Describe your struggles, impasses, traumatic events. How did you attempt to move through them? Where did/do you find support, resources? What were your highpoints?

- 5) How significant was your relationship with God during the certification process? Was your relationship with your community of faith? How would you describe changes in these relationships? What images come to mind?
- 6) How would you describe your relationship with the organizational system and the certification process? What were/are your responses to the structures—steps in the process, theory paper readers, committee appearances, peer group meetings, certification manual, standards, certification committee leadership and communication, governance, organizational ethics?
- 7) How have you experienced power issues? How do you experience the organization's sensitivity to diversity? How have you experienced the organizational structures (fair and just, open and accessible, oppressive and devaluing, allow for abuse and exploitation)? In what ways did they or did they not help you learn; help you discover your voice, strengths, and energy for the work; assist you in your journey toward wholeness?
- 8) While in the certification process, how significant was your relationship with students in shaping your supervisory identity? How significant was the CPE community as a place of belonging? How significant was it as a culture that shaped you?

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APPENDIX 7

Ethical Statement and Confidentiality Agreement



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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT
Judith S. Roska, D. Min. Candidate
Claremont School of Theology, Claremont CA

REFLECTIONS ON WOMEN'S NARRATIVE STORIES
AND THE CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION PROCESS

INTRODUCTION AND ETHICAL STATEMENT

I am interested in hearing and reflecting upon stories of women (CPE) supervisors and your journeys as they relate to the certification process. I will listen with empathy and honor each woman's story in its own depth, uniqueness and particularity—with a commitment to hearing your truth. Thank you for your interest in this project.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I will honor your story with confidentiality. I will not repeat or write about stories in ways that would signal the identity of the interviewee. Names will not be used. I will be interviewing eight women from a variety of regions. Demographic data, dates and ages will be altered or not used in order to disguise identity. Stories may be divided into "earlier certified," "more recently certified," and "in the process" groupings. There will be diversity in race, sexual orientation, and religious background in the group of women being interviewed. Those aspects of identity will not be altered: however, religious background will be discussed in general rather than in specific terms.

TAPES AND TRANSCRIPTS OF THE INTERVIEW

I will be audio taping our interview, then transcribing the tapes into transcripts. The interview will be conducted on the telephone with a tape recorder. I will indicate to you when I will start and stop the taping. After the project is written and approved in 2001 and the tapes or transcripts are no longer needed for this particular study, they will be destroyed. I will not use the tapes or transcripts for any other purpose. If the project is not approved at that time I will contact you.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

I will be doing only one interview and setting up a two hour time block with you. It may not take that long, but you should allow for a quiet relaxed place and uninterrupted time. I will facilitate an open-ended structured interview. I am looking forward to this time with you.

AGREEMENT

I understand the ethical statement and confidentiality agreement. I authorize the audio taping of a telephone interview with Judith S. Roska for the D. Min. Project, "Reflections on Women's Narrative Stories and the CPE Certification Process."

(Signature) _____ (Interviewer) _____

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